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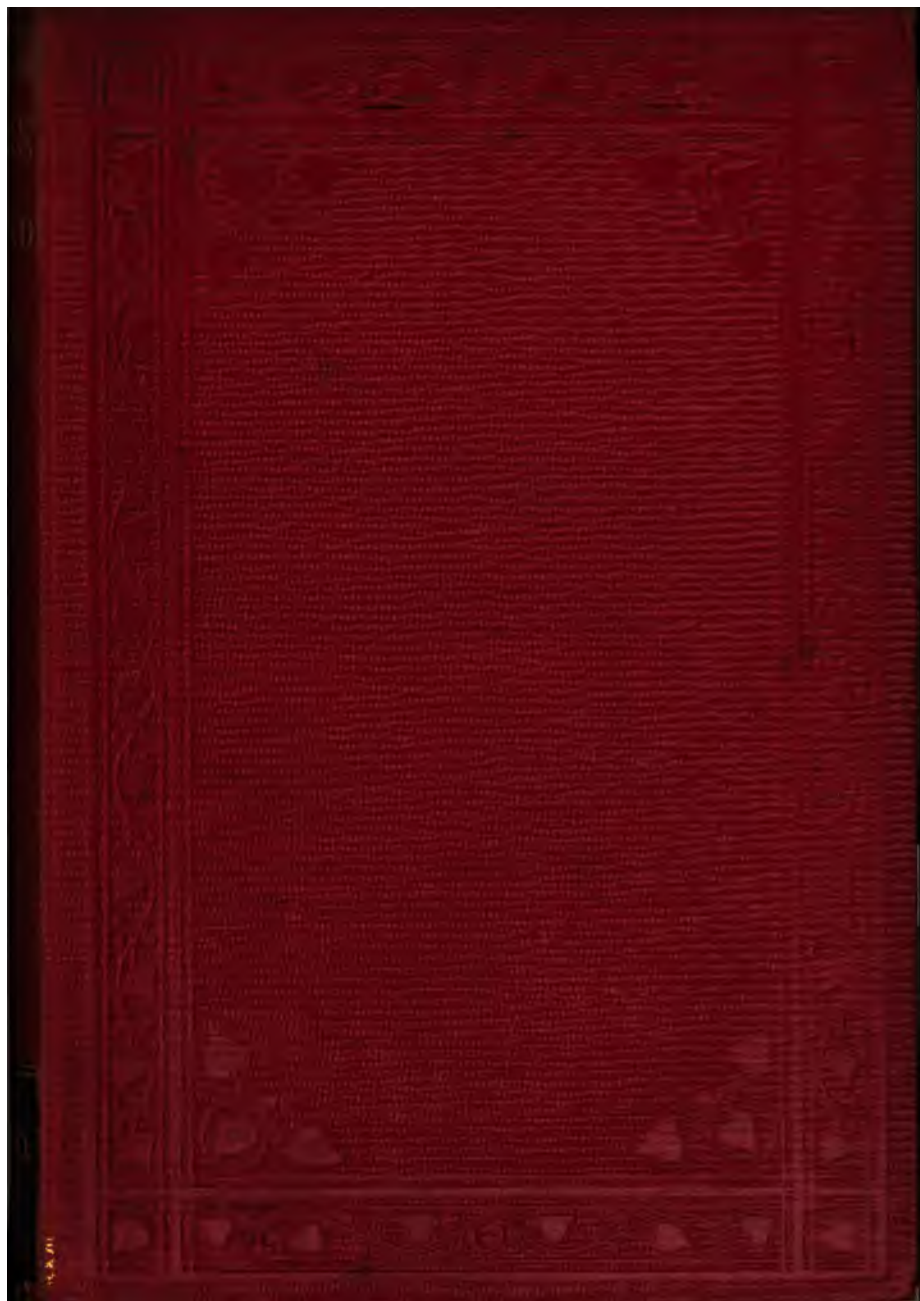
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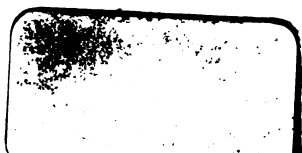
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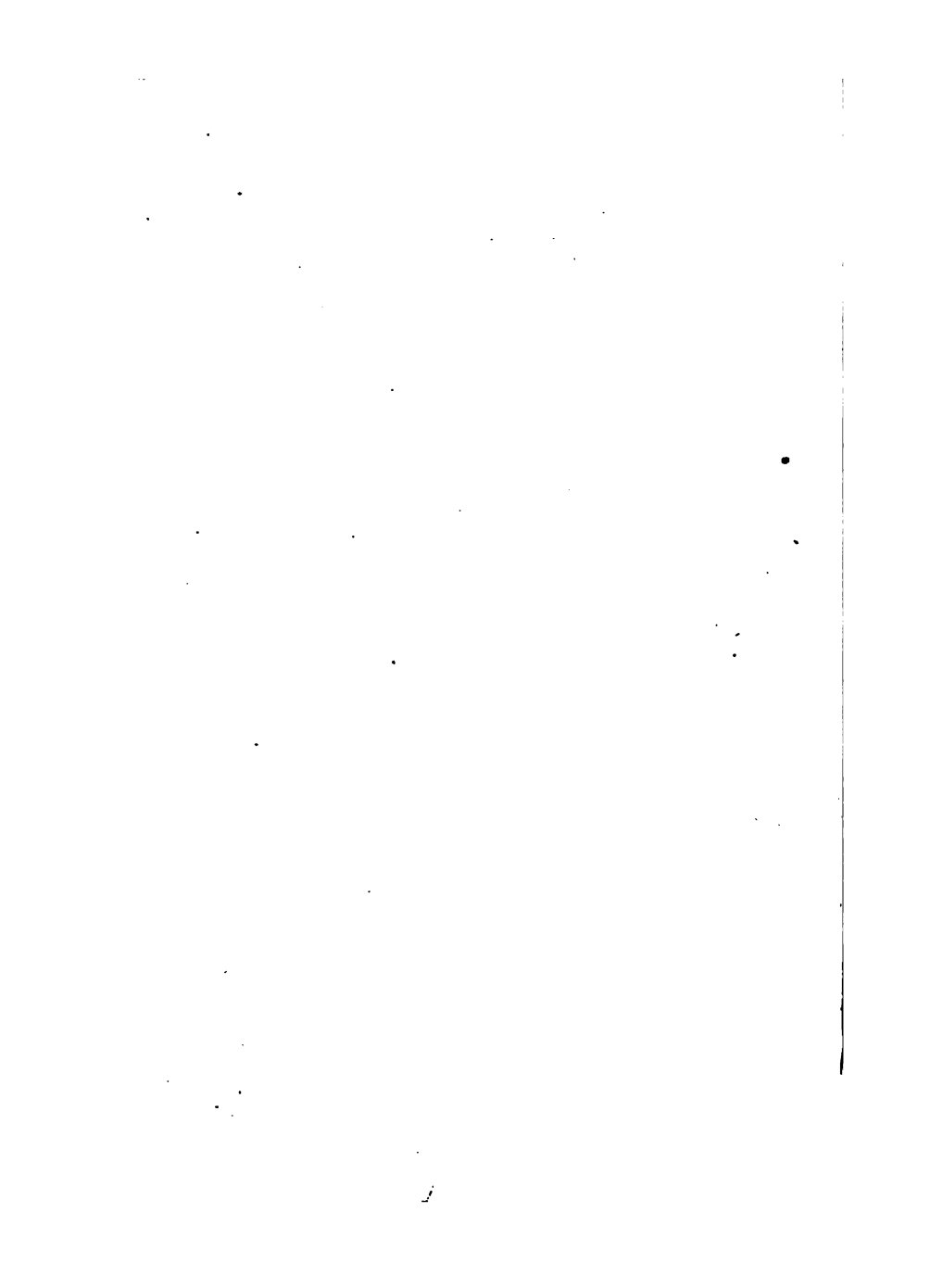
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THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
HENRY DURAND,

WITH

A BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE BY THE LATE
PROFESSOR A. VINET, OF LAUSANNE.

" Vous de la lyre, amis harmonieux,
Oh ! recueillez avec un soin pieux
Ces chants épars où j'ai laissé mon âme."

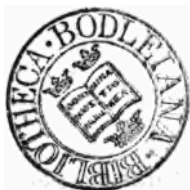
MADAME ANABLE TASTU.

Translated from the French
BY THE REV. R. A. BLOMEFIELD.

LONDON :
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TO HER

WHOSE FIRST PROMPTING THIS TRANSLATION

AND TO

THE MEMORY OF MANY HAPPY DAYS SPENT AT

LES AVANTS,

A MOUNTAIN RETREAT OF HER NATIVE LAND.

~~This Book~~

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED BY

THE TRANSLATOR.

PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

ALL that Swiss scenery owns of grand and beautiful is now familiar to our countrymen. But the production of a Swiss mind, especially as kindled into poetry by that scenery, is comparatively a *rara avis*. And since the original of this volume is stamped with the approving seal of one of Europe's first thinkers—the late Professor A. Vinet, of Lausanne—we indulge a hope that our translation also will not be altogether unacceptable to English readers.

It has been said,* that “a faithful and elegant translator is a character of the highest virtue in the

* Letter from Miss Talbot to Mr. Carter.—Carter's Letters, vol. i. p. 126.

literary republic." Accordingly, in spite of the condemnatory satire expressed both in Dryden's prose and Denham's verse, we advance a boast of having paid equal court to the sister-merits of Fidelity and Beauty.

Justice forbids our claiming a property in more than a fraction of the poems numbered VI., IX., and XXVI. respectively, which are principally from another hand.

Finally, we render cordial thanks to those kind friends whose prevenient patronage has brought about the launch of this little poetical craft; and express a wish that she may be found laden with interest to all, instruction to many, and glory to the Most High.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

HENRY DURAND.

THE friends of HENRY DURAND rather than the public have been considered, in now collecting and committing to the press a few verses written by that interesting young man, who has left behind him so many regrets, and borne away with him so many hopes. No doubt the public will recognise in them a true poet, and will heave a sigh over such genuine and graceful talent, the morning of which has been so early overcast; but chiefly it is from his having thrown his whole soul into his poetry, that the friends of his youth have attached so much interest to their preservation. It was also their wish to find at the head of this collection a few words touching his short life: these words I have been commissioned to write, and thankfully have I accepted the task. It was my delightful privilege to reckon Henry Durand among the number of my own disciples. Here, then, the last duties are paid by an elder to

a younger brother. There has been an interchange of parts, but such was God's will: that Will is essential order.

Henry Durand was born at Vevey, August 27, 1818. He was the younger of two sons, whom their father, dying in the flower of his age, left with a well-founded confidence to their mother's care. When his father died, Henry had scarcely come to years of consciousness. Unaided, a mother's solicitude watched over his infancy. The loss of a father is always a great one, and he whom Providence had so prematurely taken away from his task deserved to be regretted. But when a family happens to lose its natural guardian, it is possible that the loss may be less than the gain, if its need and danger lift its view heavenward and keep it there. God then shows Himself a Husband to the widow and a Father to the fatherless; and what Husband, what Father like God? Such was the experience of these two children. It seemed as though the widow had received from her husband on his deathbed a legacy of his authority unimpaired, and that the rights and dignity of the father had passed entire into the mother's hands. To the view of her children she was ever both in one; and, as though the sight of this double responsibility which she had to bear alone had mingled with Henry's respect an indescribable feeling of noble compassion, he bowed more low before that womanly

will than he had done, perchance, before the will of a father. Thanks to this right feeling, the presence and working of a manly authority never seemed wanting ; only his obedience appeared to be fraught with a certain admixture of greater delicacy and tenderness. Henry's mental frame was, from his birth, very happily constituted. He had all that imagination and sensibility which his expressive features and noble bearing pre-indicated ; but these fine endowments do not always admit of being easily governed. It would be hard to find the key to the purity, or even, one might say, the regularity of that young life, too full, too lively, to all appearance, to be always kept from overflowing, except in the influence of those Christian ideas and habits, in the midst of which, as in a pure and mild atmosphere, his happy childhood grew up. There is a fund of poetry in the soul of every child. His was richer than ordinary ; since there was nothing in his education to check that inner life, it expanded at leisure beneath that beautiful sky and beside those enchanting shores, which are themselves, so to speak, an eternal poem. Young Henry's soul early allied itself to this magnificent scenery. His dearest emotions and even his gravest thoughts became eternally attached to his native country, in all its aspects and all its localities. He loved that natural scenery with a love marked by artlessness and piety ; he loved it as the Divine handiwork--as a symbol

of Deity, a book written with His fingers. And when he became better acquainted with that other book, more exalted and more clear, beside which Nature is, at the best, a music without words, while he understood better these visible wonders he loved them increasingly.

The poetic sentiment which Henry possessed was flung like a golden reflection upon every manifestation of a soul peculiarly sympathetic and a character highly sociable. Everything flourished under his hands. His kindness was adorned with courtesy, his friendship delighted itself in symbols, his childish imagination, at remarkable and happy moments, uttered, impromptu, many grave sayings, pleasingly expressed. To credit it in him we must ourselves not only caress, but entertain with a festal welcome, those whom we love. Too often an unhappy childhood forebodes and preludes a wretched maturity. Henry's was happy—happy at small cost, like all real enjoyment: provision had been made for it in God and his family. Too great inferiority in any one particular, and, above all, a general inferiority, exposes a child to extreme danger, especially when receiving a public education. There is nothing then but Religion which can raise us so high as to place us above that miserable sentiment—Envy. Henry Durand had no need to become acquainted with it. Everything preserved him from this. While, therefore, we congratulate him on this score, we must not

be too harsh in our judgment of those who, owing to their unhappy position, have, perhaps from infancy, been inoculated with this cruel poison.

Henry Durand was, by the wish of his family, devoted to the service of the Gospel. His eyes, quietly set in that direction, were not once diverted to any other prospect. His heart was always in unison with such a future. Even when his heart expanded to the emotions inspired by the Fine Arts, by Poetry, or Patriotism, he can hardly be said, though but for a few moments, to have cast toward any other career a look of envy or regret. There is an age when everything presses on us a simultaneous claim, and the young heart resembles those untaught painters who, not knowing perspective, put every object in the foreground. Henry was not one of those young men of whom one sees so many in the present day, who begin by entertaining a contemptuous view of life, and stripping it of all its enchantment. He began by believing in life and in himself; he knew every form of enthusiasm; the child of a country in which civilisation has not effaced the very last traces of natural life, to him motion, air, and sun were sources of sweet intoxication. He tasted the joy, the transports of youth. He had cheerfulness enough to lend elsewhere. His presence among his fellow-students foretokened and gave the signal for enjoyment. Bound, however, as he was by tenderest associations to the asylum of his

childhood, nothing gave him a distaste for the pleasures of the fireside. Happy the man whose fireside is to him a hallowed altar ! For there is an age when the energy of our life and the exaggeration of our hopes draw us hither and thither in a thousand directions, at once dividing and dissipating our souls. It is remarkable that, at the very era when the imposing idea of the world exercises the greatest fascination upon an active spirit sensible of its power, to Henry Durand's view domestic life included all that was most holy,—yes, and even after trying everything, all that was most poetical. In him it was a kind of worship, his fervid devotion to which might from time to time grow weaker, but never could become wholly extinct. A religion of a more exalted nature, in which the religion of the fireside continually merged, or, rather, from which it received continually fresh life, preserved his youth from those errors, the effects of which are felt throughout the whole life, and kept him within the limits of strict modesty, which is fallen man's innocence, and which he has himself so well defined in saying that, "Shame in the bad is a recollection of good; in the good, a recollection of evil."

We do not pretend that this epoch of his life bequeathed him no regrets, or that these regrets were unfounded. There is no age, there is no situation, in which the heart's sole rule is quietly to follow its own bent. Reason demands that everything human

be weighed and measured. "We must not be indiscriminate in what we see, feel, and hear." Placed in the midst of his friends, as a sort of *princeps juventutis*, Henry Durand might linger now and then along those smiling paths, wherein, far from the dust of the highway, so many took delight in treading in his steps. It is only from his own confession we know that he devoted so much of his thoughts to those noble recreations which resemble duties too nearly to admit of a heart like his not being at times deceived thereby; but we have no hesitation in repeating avowals so honourable to him. At a later period, when he had been initiated into German university life, he lamented the, in his estimation, enormous deficiencies of his former life. Nevertheless, he might congratulate himself that his youthful sap had never flowed through channels less pure; Poetry, Friendship, Fatherland contributed the largest share to these dissipations, with which many other persons would not have reproached themselves; and he had no cause for regret in having infused new life into that Zofingen-Society, which has benefited Switzerland to a greater extent than any could have foreseen, or than many could have supposed possible.

At the moment of his departure for Germany, he was engrossed with literature rather than theology. He was a poet; he wished to be a poet; and an ardent spirit only wishes one thing at a time. Then it was he sent in for competition to our Academy,

and inserted in a newspaper, several pieces of poetry, some of which appear in this collection. We regret not having included in it one of his most juvenile efforts, a poem in three cantos, entitled *Otho of Grandson*, studded with the most beautiful inspirations, and stamped with the profoundest realisation of the times and localities alluded to, but betraying, in its composition and style, a hand of too limited experience.

Eighteen months passed in Germany (from November, 1839, to the spring of 1841) stirred to a great depth all the faculties of our young friend. That solitude,—for, on issuing from the world of family and friends, such, to him, was the crowd, “that vast human desert,”—that solitude threw him back upon himself. The various events of his preceding life became, in his eyes, experience. He recollected himself not without tears. Perhaps it was at this period he wrote that sentence, which deserves to be pondered: “Let old men talk and boast of their experience! all that remains of it is no more than this,—that while some is gain, much also is loss.” Weaned from those relations of love which for a shorter or longer while shroud from tender hearts the irremediable emptiness of life, he sought to fill up that emptiness by calling to his aid that religion which he loved, but his acquaintance with which was yet only to a slight extent deep and experimental. Then, too, he learned the religious

value of science and the intrinsic worth of truth. The sight of those gaps which he had left in his studies, instead of disheartening him, drew out to their full stretch all the elastic energies of his soul. All his faculties grew; the contours of his thought assumed a more definite shape; a certain air of manliness was stamped upon that still blooming youth, without crushing or withering it; he passed, as it were, through a second youth better than the former. Even he, to whom his family was so dear, who yearned so after the air and sky of his native country, shrunk not from writing and repeating to his friends, "that the years he spent in Germany ought to be regarded as the fairest of his life."

Yes, they were fair; but theirs was not a beauty of serenity and smiles. Studies of the gravest order brought him into the presence of the mightiest difficulties. He thought himself obliged to look them in the face. He accepted, unhesitatingly, but not without emotion, this condition of Christianity, to be incessantly keeping abreast of science. He had his hours of alarm, his moments of daring speculation; he defended and abandoned in turn the ground of which he believed himself master; he fancied in turn the necessity of replacing or fortifying the foundations of his belief. As by the thousand chinks in her keel water gains stealthy entrance into a vessel, so scepticism, by a thousand avenues, sought to penetrate his spirit. But amid

these intellectual storms, his faith strengthened itself and grew imperturbably. One might say, that in him, doubt and living faith, the one transient, the other immovable, were born on the same day; as though it had pleased God at once to permit the enemy to breach the outworks, while He fortified the heart of the place with an unassailable rampart.

It seems, however, that German philosophy did not fill a large space in his anxieties. Not but that, in a certain measure, his spirit was given to generalisation and speculation; but there was within him a living energy, which shrank with horror from a pure abstraction as from an icy desert: his genius was but little engaged in discussing absolute systems, but his instinct refuted them. He had been but a short while in Germany, when we find him already writing thus to his family:—

“The vallies (in the neighbourhood of Erlangen) are charming, full of freshness and verdure, adorned with picturesque rocks overhanging beautiful streams. One hopes, on surmounting these heights, to find beautiful views, wide landscapes, a new and diversified country; but no such thing: you climb, and climb, and in proportion as you ascend the charm lessens, and at the top you have nothing but dull uniform table-land, a cheerless and barren horizon all around; even the charming little vallies have disappeared. This it is that creates an essential difference between these mountain districts and

ours. In this point of view, will not the German mountains bear some relation to the German mind? I intend to investigate this idea more thoroughly."

Again we read:—

"As to my heart-dreams of success, of labours in the career of thought, since I have seen here in Germany so many fruitless efforts, such true Pygmean Babels, in order that each man may raise himself to a height of knowledge and science which he denies to others, I have found enough, indeed, to awaken my sympathy, but little whereon to fix my belief, or even my trust."

He found in Germany that which is not peculiar to that country, but is sometimes found on quitting one's own; to wit, a novelty of position which invites, or rather forces a man to reflect; an independence of judgment, which long-established usages serve to cramp; a habit of meditation engendered by the necessity of living in the company of one's own thoughts. To young Durand this period was one of happy and rapid development. Not every one who goes to that studious country in quest of food for the mind could write like our young friend—"I feel quite a spring budding in my breast; the cold as yet keeps it back: when will the sun be warm enough to make it break out and flourish?" That desired spring failed not to bloom. When we next saw Henry Durand, he seemed to us, quite a

new man. More speculative, more abstract, more systematic, he was at the same time (but not on those accounts) more serious, more matured, more affected by the truths which he believed. Germany gave a form to his thoughts; the foundation came from elsewhere—from above. But it is remarkable that, at the same time, his call to the ministry came to be a doubtful point with him. At least, he felt himself strongly drawn towards other pursuits, to that extent as to make him hesitate for some time. He himself lets us know, in one of his letters—“I am about manfully to apply myself to the study of theology, even (it is my duty to let you know) although my wishes, my inclinations, the bearing of my mind, lies rather toward another quarter. But I know how far these inclinations and these tastes may possibly be temporary; I say to myself, if through a youthful caprice, or an error of the imagination, I turn away irreparably from a fixed and glorious calling, of the need of which mankind is so constantly sensible, I may hereafter bring upon myself profound regret, when with a more serious tone of mind, and a heart, perhaps, detached from everything beside, I shall be desirous of consecrating my powers to the eternal interest of men. In my study of theology, then, I am procuring for myself an asylum, a haven of refuge; not (be sure that you understand) for my present wants, but a haven, an asylum for my soul and for my spiritual activity.”

Henry Durand worked hard during his sojourn in Germany, and his acquirements, of which he never made a display, astonished his fellow-students and his masters. He came back in April 1841. From that period till his illness he worked might and main. Motives, the most honourable, urged him into an abuse of his strength. He prepared simultaneously for several subjects of competition proposed by the Academy, and was fortunate in all. A work on the Book of Ecclesiastes occupied most of the fine summer days, which he spent with his family in the agreeable seclusion of Baugy, near Montreux. It was with a serious aim, and under a feeling of modesty, that he selected a subject, the difficulties of which are so alarming. He treated it with candour, and, in certain subjects, candour nearly resembles audacity. But, if it were possible to mistake, the words with which he closed his work, and which we do ourselves the pleasure of copying, would leave no doubts as to the spirit in which he handled the difficulties raised by this extraordinary book :—

“ While bringing this little work to a conclusion, in which I have, perhaps, manifested too great freedom, I feel the need of imploring the goodness of our God, and I earnestly beg of Him, that if I may possibly have in any way offended in regard to that respect which is due to Him, to Him and to His Word, He would be pleased to make me ac-

quainted therewith, to pardon it, and bestow on me the favour of enlightening me in every similar undertaking, and keeping me from doing or saying anything contrary to His glory, which is nothing else than truth itself."

How could it be possible that Poesy should not visit him in these charming retreats? She scattered more flowers around him than the sun caused to blow on those enchanting hills. His last inspirations, however, were not all smiles. When yet full of life and health, the thought of death visited him more than once; and there is ground for believing that an inner voice warned him of an end not far distant. A fearful and tragical subject, furnished by a popular tradition, laid forcible hold on that fancy, naturally smiling, over which melancholy alone had now and then flung a light and transparent veil. He was taken up with thoughts of the art in those leisure moments which graver cares left him. As a poet he examined himself; he made trial of his own abilities in order to get acquainted with them. His talent, for a long time unwilling to submit to discipline, had held form and style in too great contempt; certain criticisms offended him; like many other writers at the outset, he complained of not being understood, and perhaps all the while in secret he rejoiced at it. Every truth is at a certain distance from our minds; they must have time to reach it, and none can calculate that time for him-

self—none trace out his own path. The literary conversion of our young poet was brought about in silence ; so early as during his sojourn in Germany he wrote to a friend : “ I have made a successful beginning of my . . . , provided that I go on in the same style ! it will be one more occupation, but not a bad one : at last I must learn to write.”

It would not be right, however, to search his last poem for decisive evidence of this return to good principles. That work, the first execution of which took up a great deal of his time, was yet in a rough state when it passed out of his hands ; the time fixed for competition had expired ; and his health, which became impaired about the same period, would not have allowed him to put the finishing strokes to his poem, even if it had remained in his possession. His indisposition had already lasted some time when the prize was adjudged to his composition, and we laid on his bed of pain a crown, some leaves of which had been already broken away by the breath of criticism. It was on the same bed that he attended—if one may use the expression—a festival, of which he would have been the soul, and his absence from which caused a great gap. The Zofingien Societies of Lausanne and Geneva, who held a réunion in the former of these two cities, met under his window to sing a song of hope and friendship ; no one, except perhaps himself, failed to recognise in it a farewell song. Before his family were at all seriously alarmed,

he had lent an ear, he had opened his heart, to some secret angel who spoke to him of death and eternity. He had no house to set in order; he set in order his heart. On the bed to which he was chained by a lingering disease, he wrought much in the presence of God. He redeemed the time. The faith of his earliest years,—a real child-like faith,—came to his assistance. Vice had left no stain upon it. Never did we understand better than while watching his dying moments, to what an extent moral innocence acts as a safeguard to faith; we mean, faith in Him who “came to seek and to save that which was lost.” We entreat those young persons, who shall read these lines, to ponder this important and mysterious truth.

An illness, attributable to study too long persevered in, had ended by assuming a character and a name of dreadful significance. Nervous fever had set in. When Henry became conscious of his danger, his thoughts had already taken a direction hitherto. Ere long, he was conscious of it no longer; he fell into that state in which reason ceases to link together our ideas, and to connect them all together with some single moment of our existence. The bundle was burst; incoherent dreams took the place of thoughts. But in the height of the delirium his spirit was self-consistent; it was easy of recognition; it was all that it ever was; it even showed itself more fair, for nothing any longer hindered that

pearl at the bottom of the ocean from mounting to the surface. His utterance, then involuntary, still dwelt on faith, on hope, on pure and tender affections, on his family, his country, and his duty ; sometimes, in accents which at once melted and thrilled with awe the hearer's soul, he pointed out dangers, enemies that he had met, that he had encountered with prayer, against which he prayed still ; he caught glimpses of the city of rest, and seemed desirous to carry away thither in his footsteps those whom he loved the best. Little by little the delirium abated, calm returned, the more alarming symptoms disappeared, and every one let himself be seduced with hope,—every one but the patient. It was a momentary respite preparatory to the last struggle ; delirium agitated anew his mind and his senses, and conducted him, as it were, through a long dream, till he woke up in death. This took place on February 13th, 1842, at eight o'clock in the evening.

A young man of three-and-twenty, a simple student, was dead ; but, owing to the sympathy and hopes which he had inspired, his loss became a public calamity. A very large procession, in a town where funerals are not much attended, followed his "mortal coil" to the field where it was to rest. All wanted to manifest their partnership in grief with a mother, the happiest of all mothers until this moment. All the members of the Academy and the College, by whom his death was felt as a family bereavement,

walked next behind Henry Durand's near relations. The everlasting emblems of youth and hope so entirely covered the funeral-pall, that to the eye it might have seemed a bed of verdure and flowers. At the cemetery, when the coffin, stripped of this decoration, appeared in its nakedness, one of the young student's masters addressed to him words of farewell. A wish has been expressed to find them in this place:—

“ Henry (or by whatever name thou art named in thy new fatherland), farewell ! Farewell in the name of thy friends, in whose hearts thou filledst so large a place,—in the name of thy masters, on whom thou reflectedst so much honour, and in whom thou inspiredst so much hope,—in the name of thy country, to whom thou wert already endeared ! Long shall we recall with sorrow all that disappeared in this tomb along with thee ; that exalted and acute intellect ; that fine, lively imagination ; that talent, so replete with originality and grace ; all those flowers that were on their way to become fruits. But we have other and better recollections ; and thy friends will often repeat these words, which in thought they grave upon thy tomb :—‘ He sought after the mind of God ; he loved his Saviour, and was beloved by him.’* Farewell, our young brother, and now our eldest brother ; farewell ! ”

* These words have been engraved on the marble monument which marks the grave of our young friend.

Near the trench, amid a silence religiously observed by the whole assembly, Henry's friends sang some stanzas, composed for the occasion by a master whom the deceased most dearly loved — his master in poetry, the Professor M. Olivier :—

“ He is not, he is not !
Thou Thy pleasure hast got :
Lord, tow'rd earth to bend lowly be now our lot !
He is not, and our sight
Shall no longer delight
In our brother, our friend, save in heaven's far height.

Truth, and talents, and grace,
Gaiety, tenderness !
Tow'rd the earth bending lowly let us turn our face !
Now, alas ! all is lost,
And, with heart tempest-tossed,
Strength in seeking our brother we vainly exhaust.

Mighty God ! all these flow'rs !
All, to last so few hours !
Now our heads tow'rd the earth to bend lowly be ours.
But, in heavenly day,
Thither taken away,
Thou anew bloom'st already, our brother away.

Mournful now is our tone,
Of the coffin sad groan ;
Tow'rd the earth to bend lowly becomes us alone.

But thou, brother, on high
Soarest up to the sky,
On thy lute to trill anthems that never shall die !

Thou in love liv'st again :
Thou no more art in pain !
Tow'rd the earth bending lowly be ours to remain.
Take we comfort, adieu !
Till the glad rendezvous !
Now adieu, O our brother — our brother, adieu !”

A fervent prayer, made by Henry's paternal uncle, sent the bystanders away full of those feelings and thoughts which are the real blessings accompanying days of anguish and mourning.

That day will never be forgotten. Above all will it abide in the memory of our young friend's fellow-students. The recollection of his life will be, as it were, a brilliant point of light in their Past: the recollection of his death will raise their hearts towards that Heavenly Friend, in whose arms the beloved companion of their youth yielded up his last sigh.

A. VINET.

We shall act agreeably to the majority of our readers, if we preserve in this place the following verses, which were found among the flowers on

Henry Durand's coffin. They are the composition of one of his dearest friends, M. F. Troyon :—

“ By a fond hope once cradled, we all liked to say,
When the tones of his lyre bade Love in us play ;
That to us should his chantings belong,
In the land we love well that new blossoms should
shine :
But the Saviour invited him angels to join
In triumphant and undying song !

Songs of spring, of our shores the sweet echoes, adieu !
To the grave's border borne, when a stormy wind blew,
In a single brief day from our eyes ;
Now thy echoes and songs are no more for this earth,
'Neath the funeral veil where pale flowers find birth :
Over thee are the brightest of skies !

Thine, my young friend, it is heaven's music to hear,
Into mysteries deep thine for ever to peer —
Thine to fathom the treasures of Love !
Before us holy griefs, tears, repentance, lie ope,
And the strifes of this world, and the comforting hope
That one day we shall meet thee above ! ”



P O E M S.

P O E M S.

I.

TO MY FRIENDS.

WHEN in untutor'd accents among you
I made my earliest effort poet-wise ;
When from his home celestial down I drew
The spirit of sweet and holy harmonies ;
"Take courage in your lays," ye said to me,
"O charm long time the road we pass along !"
Beloved friends ! blest may that omen be !
For you again I'll bring forth many a song !

Ye sacred ties, round a dear circle cast,
Ah, doom'd in youth asunder to be rent !
Ye dreamy longings, which in seasons past
Some tender maid could with one smile content !
Ye noisy echoes, rais'd when Friendship's breast
Rehears'd her vocal tasks the ev'ning long !
Your images, by fond Remembrance drest,
One day shall know revival through my song.

Upon the height that cost a toilsome climb,
My daring lays by airs around were borne ;
Near the châlet, sweet shelter and sublime,
I woke the echoes of the rocks forlorn !
When by fresh rustling breezes rock'd, at even,
Upon our waves, my voice was heard among ;
From hills to plain, beneath this beauteous heav'n,
I fain anew would send abroad my song.

Dear cherish'd country ! with thy noble story,
In thy secluded vales repose secure !
We only know what fair gems of thy glory
Misfortune's grasp hath suffer'd to endure.
Of mountain-flow'rs thy crown thou dost entwine,
Which neither season fades nor tempest strong ;
I, for the love owed by each child of thine,
To thee at least would dedicate my song.

Toward th' horizon, where mounts up the sun,
Does not some heav'nly dawn salute your sight ?
My friends, my friends, vain dreaming this is none,
The day draws near, 'twill be superbly bright !
E'en now — O holy Future ! — in our land
Rise glorious harvests that to thee belong.
There on some mountain-top I fain would stand,
At least to greet thee with my humble song.

Lausanne, 1836.

II.

TO MY BROTHER.

FOR HIS NINETEENTH BIRTHDAY.

"Mais des ans la fuite m'étonne,
Leurs adieux oppressent mon cœur."

AMABLE TASTU.

BROTHER ! already fades thy childhood's flow'r,
Far is thine infancy. Youth, happy hour !
Already too slides by. Life's torrent course
Flows but a few days, then th' exhausted source
Ere long will stop. Spring-tide has fled apace.
See Summer to autumnal fruits give place !
Anon comes Winter with his stormy rage—
Winter of gloom and frost, to bound our age.
Oh, yes ! but then—then, brother, Death is nigh !
Men say we might, like earth, all sleeping lie !
But while, indeed, her slumber Nature takes,
Then man the rather—yes, man truly wakes !

* * * * *

The happy spirit soars for ever free ;
Content, yea proud, through space to flit at last ;
The dwindling world straight from her mem'ry's past,
For she hath seen e'en now, in heav'nly state,
The saints all trick'd, with joy for her that wait.

Oh, yes ! Hope to our life can alone support prove.
'Tis at times a sweet dream, or, still better, 'tis Love—
Cup—the dregs whereof only we drink here below,
That in turns we find able to charm away woe.

But our way through the world, brother, onward
we'll tread,
Nor e'er by its beauty so vain be misled !
Like the nest on the water we see floating o'er,
We will steadily pull to Eternity's shore.

Already the dreams of thy childhood are gone,
Perchance of thy young sighs surviveth not one ;
Take we comfort together, for Hope life inspires,
While upward tow'rd heaven we turn our desires !

Like an hour all 's past,
There is nought that will last
If 'tis not in the sky !
Oh ! how much ev'ry year
Of gall brings a supply !
How each day we spend here,

And how, every night,
From our hearts aye distrains
That Love for which strains
Youth, with sap in its veins,
Youth, that quickly takes flight.

As we motionless lie,
All appears to slip by.
Friendship has but a day,
Hope but one season knows,
And returns not for aye.
Man but one shadow throws,
But a sound gives his lyre,
And his love flies abroad
Like its idol ador'd ;
He is left without word —
Without Melody's fire.

The season is o'er,
And the spirit is sore :
Farewell, happiness calm !
Words, our bosom that swell,
So replete with a charm !
Tender tears, fare ye well !
Luring forms that have been,
Charming day-dreams whose trace
In those meadows we chase,
Which the spring-flowers grace —
Sweetest sighs of fifteen !

All the world shadow shrouds,
And with darkening clouds
Man's horizon is black.
Fear, and sorrow, and doubt
Come at eve on his track.
Those fires are gone out
In his morning that shone.
And henceforth youth so warm
Is a shadowy form ;
At its heels is the storm,
And the Future unknown.

But for us, we'll march fearless, we'll march with
good cheer !

We shall soon reach the term of our long-life career ;
May our footsteps be treading the heavenly road !
May each day that glides by in this mortal abode
Be one weight more tow'rd glory that never shall end !
And may each sorrow, each cruel loss of a friend,
Be one weight less, by Jesus remov'd, that more light
We may tow'rd Immortality wing our flight !

23d April, 1836.

III.

LOVE.

WHEN 'tis late, and all fev'rish, though night has
far sped,

I am sleeplessly pacing with purposeless tread,
And I try to recover the slumbers that flee ;
Oh ! why, then, is Life such a burden to me ?

Yet toward that asylum, where *she* sleeps so calm,
I stray, ever drawn as by magical charm ;
There alone of each lost sense the haven appears,
And only beside her more sweet are my tears. . . .

Oh ! tell me the reason why yet there can dwell
A desire in my heart, though I know fully well
That she loves me, that 'tis but the very same glow
Wherewith I am burning, she's burning also ?

Know ye ? say, when the ev'nings so beautiful are,
And the tide that's asleep mirrors every star,
In the air and the water when hush'd is each sound,
And her covering veil Night has drawn all around ;

Know ye why, while her fingers I kiss and I squeeze,
I weep, though I'm sitting so close at her knees ;
When, from humankind far, we are wholly alone,
And her breathing with mine rises mingled in one ?

And at other times, too, near the old donjon's keep,
When the clouds on the dark sky are mass'd in a heap,
And the while in our mutual love we confide,
We list to the tempests that roar and subside ;

Tell me wherefore it is, as she leans on my heart,
Her bosom ador'd feels to sigh and to start ?
Yet there's Love, our thirsty desire for bliss
To allay, for the goblet scarce yet touchèd is.

Know ye ? say, when the depth of the forest is sought,
To draw fond amusement from fanciful thought,
And the sweet voice we hear is the nightingale's song,
Or the stream as it flows through the meadow along ;

When I read all her heart in the blue of her eyes,
Why should other desires in my bosom arise ?
Why then should my looks, that tow'rd heaven aspire,
Seem from thence to demand some additional fire ?

I ought to be happy, yet heave out a groan ;
I weep, and to cherish within me am prone
Some sorrowful thought ; yet my wishes still rove
Tow'rd another more holy, more heavenly love.

And she, too, the loved one, so tender and pure,
Whom so fondly I love,—ah ! how often, I'm sure,
That I notice her tremble, or even can hear
Her voice blent with many a sigh and a tear !

'Tis that aye here below cruel suff'ring is found
Love's attendant ; and only on heavenly ground,
Toward which we are tending, with Hope for our guide,
That to love is, in truth, to be happy beside.

Oh, it is that our love here resembles not true
That love all divine, for which tears seem to sue !
That along with our age our heart also we drain,
And each day and each moment brings grief in its train !

'Tis that too well I love,—yea, adoringly bow !—
All my hope is she, object of every vow !
This is why yet in tear-drops my soul I reveal,
Why I suffer the while, why unhappy I feel !

Oh, could but our hearts pierce Obscurity's screen,
And to God mount, though measureless space intervene ;
As the spirits angelic love Him, so could we,
Of a bliss unalloy'd then our portion should be !

For a love that's eternal belongs but to Him,
Who, Lord of Time's changes, night vasty and dim,
O'er Infinity ruling, that sea without shore,
Even then was our God all the ages before !

1836.

IV.

LAKE LIOSON.

(A LITTLE LAKE IN THE MIDST OF OUR ALPS.)

WHERE 'mid soft turf the Hongrin's waters pour,
Hast thou one day the hill-side clamber'd o'er,
Which far above some Alpine cots ascends ?
O'er the road's edge the aged pine-tree bends ;
Beside, the purling stream, in sheets of white,
Leaps o'er a bed with moss and flow'rs bedight ;
The butterfly, in tints of fresh array,
Seems like an air-flow'r, and from spray to spray
The bird flits, glad to hear its echoing song.
Thus you forget the steep you've climb'd along,
The day's fatigue, the sun of summer-tide ;
But when your sky presents a span more wide,
When, by the pathway led, the forest past,
You march 'mid stony blocks asunder cast,
When at your feet the wavy plain is seen,
Spread out with hillocks, woods, and valleys green ;
On yet a little, round the rock then steal,—
See'st thou it now ? . . . God thus would it conceal,

Compass'd with verdure, by these hills enclos'd,
Of rocks and flowers is its frame compos'd,
These hills around, between, this lake set down !
Like sapphire on the forefront of a crown.
See'st thou it, bluer than the bluest sky ?
What charming outlines round its border lie !

Oh ! with its banks enamell'd, grassy marge,
This chalet, mountain-scent, and herdsman's charge !
In flow'ry casket, Lioson descry !
How well 'tis plac'd there, than the plains more high,
More high than vale, and huts, and piny grove,
Nearer to heaven. Oft, too, sails above
The eagle from his eyrie ; sometimes, too,
The bird of thunder stoops his form to view.

In spring 'tis fair, when swallows home take flight !
When o'er its blue waves swim the ice-flakes white,
Like a gay flock of swans with glitt'ring plumes,
When the frail soldanelle beside it blooms !
'Tis ever fair ! When the sun's rays that shine,
Already gild the peaks with light divine,
Night still in dark sleep rocks it. Soon in turn
Waking, with thousand rays sublime 'twill burn.
When back again those sparkling shafts it sends,
That flood of glory which the Heaven lends,
To Fancy's view there might to God arise
From off this earth a morning sacrifice.

Yon châlet, and old roof where smoke-wreaths play,
Voice of the herd, that greets a brilliant day,
Then spreads all round amid the flow'ry turf;
Mist that to heaven flies, like light sea-surf,
Or drapes the rock!—Might it not seem to be
An Eden of enchantment, or that we
By magic art were rapt? At ev'ning, too,
Come, when the blushing summit smiles adieu,
Purple the skies, the water sleeps below
Night's canopy; the Alps more tow'ring show;
And tow'rd the glacier grows chill the air,
As though the North wind's breath were passing
there.

Once more my lake see!—Yonder hearth-fire mark,
That shines and dances o'er its mirror dark!
List to the ev'ning murmurs, sighs that pant,
And distant echo of the herdsman's chant!
At length when all is hush'd, and o'er the height
And plain is spread the veil of beauteous Night,
When a light plash alone the stillness mars,
And on the sleeping tide descend the stars;
When from its rocky screen mounts in pure heav'n
The moon that cradles earth to slumber giv'n;—
The moon that smiles, and sheds a liquid glow
O'er the blue sky, and azure lake below;—

Scud the white clouds before its pallid beams,
And when our earth is only wrapt in dreams,

Another, purer far, then seems to rise,
And with strange forms to animate our skies.

All is alive ! the air is peopled, note,
With spirits light, that like a light cloud float
Along the mountains with recesses dim ;
Flit on the bank, and o'er the water skim.
There dips a fairy form, and on the mere
Streaks the moon's image ; stoops another here,
Like a celestial pilot, by the hand
Guiding a snow-white shallop to the land.

This airy world, Night's livery that wear,
These guests mysterious of lake and air,
All these light sylphs, these various phantom elves,
Are sprites that in the mountains sport themselves.

There needed such ethereal spirit-band
To animate these waves, to throng this strand ;
And for these angels also, gone astray,
Till one from heav'n arrive to guide their way,
There needed this pure air, these banks that glow ;
And, that their light existence still might flow,
Needs must this lake begem our earthly ball,
Like heav'nly spangle bid by God to fall !

V.

LAY FOR THE NEW YEAR.

TO MADAME * * *

THE year has fled, its latest hour has peal'd!
And the new months, with hopeful op'ning bright,
Both to the wretched weeper comfort yield,
And to our days promise a brilliant night.
Now, when embracing friend to friend replies,
Braving snow, ice, and Winter's ev'ry phase,
Would that to you, free from encumbering ties,
Myself might be the bearer of my lays!

Now sweet or rich gifts each to other sends,
In mutual feasting all are eager now;
This, too, the day is, when for absent friends
With rival ardour Love forms many a vow:
My silence for reproach shall give no ground.
See, here for you are verses in my way,
Plenty of wishes here and hope abound!—
But for my gift, I've nothing but a lay.

When, at nightfall, my spirit is a prey
To memories whereon it loves to muse,
When all the stores of joy in thought I weigh,
That year laid up for me, which now we lose,
Oh! then I dream about those hours so fair,
When joyous Friendship, freed from formal ways,
Cheer'd us, surrounding you with faithful care,
And cheer'd itself by chorusing my lays.

I sigh; how quickly fortune from us goes,
And in the heart a grievous hollow leaves!
Alas! our time for smiling weary grows,
And soon, with Winter, sadder hues receives.
—But no; in vain such thought shall lead me wrong;
You taught me gaiety in former days;
And to the light guitar, perchance ere long,
'Twill yet be mine to chant for you my lays.

Oh! in my breast, the names of those I love,
To last for a long future, graven are;
This day the same with you, too, let it prove;
In your remembrance give your friend a share!
Our voices also, lost in distance quite,
E'en like our hearts in unison shall play;
Hence toward you my thoughts shall wing their flight;
Think you on me, as you repeat my lay.

1st of January, 1837.

VI.

THE ADIEUX.

WHENCE arises this load on my heart ?
To the path cling my lingering feet ;
Ye phantoms of childhood, depart,
Nor in future your visits repeat !
Alas ! the awakening dawn
With its mantle clothes heaven anew ;
O'er the vale, while Sleep's curtain is drawn,
Let me waft it my mournful adieu !

I am leaving thee, forest, so lone !
Where the strawberry I cull'd as a child ;
Where at ev'ning my young step has flown
From the mystery, trembling and wild !
Ye rocks ! that were wont in this vale
My numbers to echo so true ;
My numbers, so swift to exhale,
To-day echo back my adieu !

Oh why, amid verdure and shade,
Ever rose up this dearly-loved pile ;
Asylum wherein I have stray'd,
Through a childhood all pureness and smile ?
Alas ! as in winters of yore,
On thy hearthstone no fire shall I view ;
For me 'twill be kindled no more,—
Adieu, home paternal, adieu !

O'er my brow shall no shade spread abroad,
Save the willow that droops o'er my tomb ;
Adieu, rustic house of my God,
Where the Sabbath knew nothing of gloom !
Ye flowers, in tear-water'd mould,
On the tomb of my mother that grew ;
Ye sods of the churchyard that hold
The sleepers in Jesus, adieu !

But why do these burning drops fall
From my eyes that I fancied were dried ? . . .
'Tis yon waterfall, ruinous wall,
And bowers that secretly hide !
'Tis the path where my soul was misled,
All mad for a soft eye of blue !
Flame of Love, tell me whither art fled !
Alas ! 'tis thy long last adieu !

The landscape turns grey to my sight,
Where all will forget me one day ;

Yes, here is the top of the height,
And the cross where the path turns away !
And the gold-tinted vale at my feet,
'Neath a heaven of fiery hue,
Like the hum of a beehive so sweet,
As it wakes, seems to send up adieu !

VII.

FRAGMENT.

* * * * *

BUT say,—To what numbers attun'st thou thy lyre ?
 In this land of enchantment what most doth inspire ?
 Would'st thou tell of the Alps, and Lake Lemman so fair ?
 Would'st thou sing of the freedom thy countrymen share ?
 Or, unveiling the memory of times that are gone,
 Would'st thou sing of some name scarce in history known?

Nay ! at morn hath a flower sometimes met thy view ?
 How its tiny cup fills with the tear-drops of dew !
 Then half-bending over, its burden to shun,
 Straight is empty, and mounts up anew to the sun.
 That flower resembles my heart of eighteen ;
 I must sing, for this heart is o'erflowing, I ween.

When with musings or tears it is fillèd too well,
 Oh ! thou know'st at such moment it proves like a spell
 Thus in verse all to pour itself over the brim,
 Reverie, holy love, sigh, and tenderest hymn.
 Yes, the poesy hoarded too long in my breast,
 Rolls out in long waves from my spirit oppress !

VIII.

THE BUTTERFLY ON THE MOUNTAIN.

A BUTTERFLY flew o'er the heath,
The laughing brook and wood between,
And cradled on the heaven's breath,
Went traversing each flow'ry green.

While throng'd around his comrades gay,
In spots the sunshine loves t' illume,
He dipp'd to cups that open lay,
Filling the air with rich perfume.

Chancing one day the hills to see,
His fatal folly whisper'd this :—
" The lowland sky is dull for me,
On high are solitude and bliss !

" There thousand flow'rs for me are bright,
There for my wing pure radiant air ;
Perchance, too, from yon sparkling height,
Up to the skies I may repair."

Tow'rd this fair dream he longs to climb ;
Then o'er the plain, the woods, the vales,
Proud of his new-found track sublime,
Away disdainfully he sails.

The azure fields his flight beneath,
The Alp which bears the high glacier
Above the mists, eternal wreath,
Like beacon-light to mountaineer ;

A thousand scents that blossoms new,
Nature's pure censers, upward fling,
The path aspiring to pursue,
Urge 'bove the clouds his vent'rous wing.

Where the lone lakelet crouching lies,
Some verdant spots his progress hold,
And, mirror'd in those secret skies,
Ravish'd he views his wings of gold.

Then soars he upward, void of fear,
Casting brave farewells to the ground ;
And flits toward the blue glacier,
Self-pois'd, amid the gulphs profound.

There Alps with rounded summits soar,
Those steps remote, where springtide rests,
And brightest treasures from his store
Scatters around the hardy crests.

There, in one green unbroken bed,
Herbage and flowers woven lie,
Like carpet 'neath the angel spread,
Whom Heaven sends our tears to dry !

The madd'ning bliss he scarce can own,
Unrivall'd flow'rs, new sun, pure air !
Here are display'd for him alone,
All he desires, beyond compare.

Joyous on ev'ry cup he lights,
Odours and honey ev'rywhere
He quaffs ; and, drunk with sweet delights,
Thinks to have found his heaven there.

Night fell, and o'er yon icy height,
The snow sent down a bitter blast ;
Then droop'd the flow'r before its might,
And death seem'd present as it past.

Day came ; from earth all slumber fled ;
Op'd heav'n before the sun's bright eyes ;
The flow'r uprear'd its lonely head,
But ah ! nought flew tow'rd th' azure skies.

Slept still, and hid, the butterfly,
A pale anemone below ;
Some after-wind his body dry,
Toss'd down as far as Autumn's snow.

Châlet des Agites, August 1837.

IX.

THE COT.

IN at the lattice peeps the day,
The dawn is breaking, friends, away !
Beneath the mists which disappear,
Are seen the cattle herding near ;
The lowing cow impatient stands,
With milk all ready to our hands :
The sun implores us, bright and hot,
Arise, arise, within the cot !

O'er rugged slopes, abysses deep,
Through windings dangerous and steep,
We'll struggle on to gain the height !
Then, in the valley out of sight,
There will we rest the livelong hours,
There deck our brow with myrtle flow'rs !
On strawberries cull'd from that sweet spot
We'll feast anon within our cot !

From off the rock the plain is seen
Before us, spread like mantle green :
Listen the while that human sigh,
A low, faint breath, is wafted by !
Whilst, everlasting heights, on you,
Yet shines each heav'n-reflected hue ;
And 'neath your shadow, peaceful lot !
Nestles secure our shelter'd cot !

See! up the chequer'd valley sweep
The dull mists that uncertain creep !
Already, in yon flying cloud,
The distant thunder rolleth loud.
Upon the Mount that voice, now nigh,
To Moses spoke in days gone by :
Saviour ! we pray thee, suffer not
That fiery bolt to smite our cot !

Oh, yes ! that guarding Hand is nigh ;
On Sovereign Pow'r we will rely !
Untremblingly the height looks down
On earth beneath, with shadows brown ;
The floating cloud, with murky haze
Clothes yon far world on which we gaze.
Soon will the tempest cease, I wot,
Which rumbles now beside the cot.

'Tis past away ;—the storm-wrack dun
Leaves heav'n to the unclouded sun ;

Peace is restor'd to us anew ;
The lake resumes its azure blue ;
The pine, with mournful foliage clad,
Trembles no more in forest glade ;
And the herds seek the leafy grot
Which spreads its shade around the cot.

Then, when Eve bids the moonlight play,
Tipping the hills with partial ray,
This fire behold, through dusky night,
Of friendship 'tis the beacon-light !
Yes, as these bright flames that ascend
The veil of gloom asunder rend,
Our souls, with mutual ardour hot,
Mount from the plain to yonder cot.

Back to our lodge, friends, we'll repair,
Sit round the dying embers there ;
Nigh the old roof which screens us here,
Some wand'ring step we seem to hear :
Those weird companions of the night,
Sounds that of yore were wont t' affright,
Are sprites which haunt each mountain spot,
And flitting pass around our cot.

Châlet des Agües, August 1837.

X.

COUPLETS SUNG IN HONOUR OF M. VINET.

WAKE, Echo ! in our country's vales
Sound back again each joyous lay !
Songs, that a melting heart exhales,
Tow'rd some calm heaven wing your way !
Of him, whom all were calling for,
No foreign home need envy move ;
'Mong us he stays, his travel o'er,
For God restor'd him to our love !

Wesaid, " The country of his birth,
Long absent, sure, he now forgets ;
He knows not on his native earth
What friends he leaves, what sad regrets !"
But he is here ! our holiest chants
At length his welcome back can prove ;
Exceeding joy our grief supplants,
He yet is mindful of our love !

Intent the star divine to find,
He comes to guide us, master dear ;
No veil our future more shall blind,
His bright course shall not fail us e'er.
Oh ! would that he might guide us all
From heav'n's first dawn to-day above !
And long, long seasons yet befall,
While God preserves him to our love !

7th November, 1837.

XL

* TO THE MISSES * * *

ALAS ! in vain my voice, unpractis'd quite,
For you essays a sweet and artless lay ;
And yet all easy ought to be such flight,
Since thus tow'rd you my wing must soar away.
Thou joyous swarm, that humming wak'st anew !
Ah ! if gay tints were decking summer hours,
Then would I sing, " As to young bees, to you,
To you belong the perfumes and the flow'rs."

But now, when far and wide lies whiten'd o'er
The landscape, and the *bise* † is heard to moan,
No flower comes to smile upon us more,
And at our windows Winter thrives alone.
Yet, spite its rigours, know I where one meets,
Within a choice retreat that safely cowers,
Flowers of Beauty, Poesy's rich sweets, —
To you belong the perfumes and the flow'rs.

* To a society of young ladies which had taken the name of "The Beehive."

† North-east wind, which, coming over the snowy mountains, is particularly cold.

Take courage, too! O young and glorious band!

 Upon our soil circled by deep ravine,
In gardens, the estates of our dear land,
 The tree of song divine is evergreen!
Its flow'rs, they say, are meet for early death,
 'Neath laurel-boughs gush many tearful show'rs;
But of its leaves we weave the noble wreath,—
 To you belong the perfumes and the flow'rs.

Oh, in these days, when nipp'd by the first blast,

 We see the flow'r of early Virtue droop;
When Youth beholds, his face with gloom o'ercast,
 Deceiving Hope fly off with heav'nward swoop;
Suffer ye not to wither in the dust

 The brilliancy, the young heart's peaceful bow'rs,
Guard well of Love and Pray'r the honied trust,—
 To you belong the perfumes and the flow'rs!

Then, when your rustling wings ye conscious ply,

 And to the brazen call respond one day,
Adieu to earth,—ye, bees that never die,
 Toward the heav'nly swarm will fly away.

There, there are Spring, and Youth, and Morn combin'd!

 There from our smiling eyes we'll wipe the show'rs;
And, reunited, we anew shall find

 There other perfumes drawn from other flow'rs.

10th January, 1838.



XII.

CLAPPING :
UNDER A HYGIENO-MORAL POINT OF VIEW.

A NEW STYLE OF ELEGY.

ORT when my bosom feels of this age of impiety weary,
Pleasing it is to revive other times, other beautiful heavens ;
In sweet dreams am I then to the plains of Olympia carried,
Which with her games divine Greece was wont to enliven
of old time.

Now on the crowded steps, holding in their breath with
attention,

All their senses at once on a point hath the multitude
centred ;

Under their eyes the wrestlers, with efforts who tease the
arena,

Body to body are straining their members dropping with
moisture.

Unto the Hippodrome next they pass from the games of
the Circus ;

From Orchomenus now have the clarions given the signal,

Breathless the space between have the high-mettled horses
devour'd,
Unto the fatal goal are the ardent chariots reaching;
On their countrymen's arms are the conquerors borne in
their glory,
Sprays from the groves of Altis encircle their foreheads
triumphant;
Long with Victory's shouts re-echo the banks of the
Alpheus,
Greece with unanimous voice is heard applauding her
children.

Soon my turn has arriv'd. A sun, less eagerly burning,
Causes anon to dawn new strains of poesy in me.
Pindar's lyre in my hand I hold, standing close by the
altar;
By my holy and magical song are my rivals astonied;
Silence, sacredly kept from every quarter, surrounds me.
Scarce have I ended my lay, when lo! the heaven re-echoes,
And the while for my brow they are plaiting an evergreen
chaplet,
Hark! by the thousand hands of the multitude I am
applauded.
Clap on! clap ye your hands, ye ancient children of Hellen!
Say, what triumph more noble hath e'er the universe wit-
ness'd!
Keeper of Mænalus' herds, alike with the soldier of Athens,
There are applauding together,—my verses they are
applauding.

All this was but a dream ! alas ! these glories triumphal
Have in my heart left behind an abundance of secret desires.
See ! by the side of them very pale are our glorious
triumphs,
Ours that are but for a day possess but feeble attractions.

Only one other was great. 'Tis the wish of Gallia's
children,

'Neath their tricolor flags to embrace the universe wholly ;
Marches Napoleon tow'rds the pole with threats of defiance,
Marches against his victor, the winter-ramparted giant.
Smolensk' walls to beleaguer awhile is the grand army
hinder'd ;

Pass it, however, they must—yea, pass with footsteps
triumphant ;

Forth Bonaparte, then, against the smoke-girdled ramparts,
Of his children courageous a proud battalion launches :—
Over the neighbouring hills was rang'd the rest of the army,
Everywhere the combat to view was the dominant impulse.
Then, for a moment, it sees the cohort, gallantly charging,
From the assault reel back 'neath the fire sustain'd from
the ramparts.

One might have fancied them ears of corn mow'd down
by the hailstorm.

'Neath such blows, at the first, full well might the bravest
have wavered ;

But for a moment, anon, is their faithful courage recover'd ;
Then, at a joyous pace, they rush the breach to leap over,
And, behold ! on the walls is floating the warrior eagle.

Seen by the whole grand army have been these efforts
majestic ;

All admire and triumph, and thunder applause single-
hearted,

Hands three hundred times thousand are clapp'd with
rapturous transports.

Clap on ! clap ye your hands, ye nineteenth-century heroes !
Oh ! what a rush of battle was there ! what grand appro-
bation !

Unto what height for them should mount the hope and
the courage

Who, in a moment like that, were fain to mingle in combat !

Pictures, alas ! of the past, which my young heart conjur'd
up often,

When ye were blotted out, how ye left me tears in
abundance :

After a festal day of glory, a combat, a triumph,

Yearn'd my innermost soul . . . but in vain . . . O
sorrowful fortune !

In mine ear these hands, clapp'd together, continued their
clapping,

Ever by night and by day my heart still heard them re-
echo !

I could have shed my blood to acquire but a similar glory.

I for a theatre long'd wherein I might win loud applaudings :

Even in spite of the ancient theatre, spite of the Circus,

Actor my mother must needs have seen me ! . . . by
predilection ?

No ; but led by despair . . . were it not at the critical instant

I by a remedy new had then been heal'd on a sudden.

Into a similar plight, if it be that despair ever cast you,
By such an evil as this if your heart should e'er suffer seizure,

Simple the remedy is above all : lo ! here the receipt is,
Far from dear is the drug, and very commonly found here :

—Into a well-warm'd hall take at once, or into a tavern,
Twice ten of full-grown youths, twice ten Zofingien Vaudois ;

Read some stanza to them, or some poetical trifle,
And, at the sound of your voice, you will see the charm is a-working.

While you are reading, at first, there is an indefinite murmur :

Scarce have you come to an end, when the hands in air are flung upward,

Each one makes it his task to applaud with vehement gesture,

'Tis but to warm his hands, quoth he, all chill'd by the winter.

Let the same operation a number of times be repeated,
Every several time a result identical follows.

Not once, be ye assur'd, my receipt will meet with a failure ;
Not once—no, not once—for they are Zofingien Vaudois.
Clap on ! clap ye your hands, O brave Zofingien cohort !

Say, by such clapping of hands, where lives the man that
is smitten,

Seeks he as yet in vain for applause? . . . Oh! let him
come hither!

Numbers of madmen here have already recovered their
reason.

I myself, that address you, to cure this malady never
Anywhere else have succeeded in finding a remedy prompter,
Treatment truly it is the genuine homœopathic;
To it for healing will come all they who are fir'd by am-
bition.

Useless is unto me thy art, Hippocrates, henceforth!
Ne'er shall my mother be vex'd by beholding her son as
an actor!

Boisterous clapping of hands to my nervous system is
hostile,

Better the whistle I love, I who boast to be a musician.

But what? take thou to flight, my Muse, all poverty-
stricken!

In this true age of gold a life unnotic'd were better.
What dark thoughts of contempt, alas! has it brought
thee to cherish,

That to the whistle shrill thou should'st the preference
render?

Ah! there once was a time—a time when Harmony's
accents

Over the soul had power to achieve the finest of triumphs—

Time, when in hearts of men, at the voice which genius utter'd,

Holiest rapture awoke evermore the holiest echoes.

As a sonorous rock on the strand of the sea-shore erected,
Unto the roaring tide responds and its story rehearses,
Even so then to the heart was known a superior language,
And each time it was struck some answering echo resounded.

All is, however, changed. That general murderer, Custom,
Life into Death is found transforming, Truth into Error ;
For it is even thus with all men prostitute ever,
And the less it is felt, the more need to cry loudly against it.
Erst, to an utter'd word, responded many a heart-throb ;
Verse, too, was fraught with that, which we feel to beat
in our bosoms ;

Since to the Beautiful and the True no one was rebellious,
Each was wont to applaud, and each was cognizant wherefore.

At a rehearsal now, without waiting till one has spouted,
As at Rome they were wont, at least, the *plaudite cives*,
Paltriest clapping of hands is repeated meagre and chilly

Fie ! O *tempora* !—Friends of my heart, oh ! frost-bitten *mores* !

“ We clap hands, but,” methinks ye say, “ *parbleu* ; 'tis the custom ! ”

Custom it is ? Bravo ! for myself, that's all that I care for.
Custom truly, so fine, is by no means void of advantage ;
Excellent souvenir 'tis of times now reckon'd as by-gones.

Come, then, why should my muse be deaf to so famous a
usage?

Yea, what cause can there be why tastes should thus be
assaulted?

Now, to sum up—if you would that this comedy end in a
moral,

'Tis—you already suspect it beforehand—clap away! clap,
sirs!

1838 or 1839.

XIII.

MY HEART IS FAR AWAY.

WHILE silv'ry torrents murmur'd in mine ear,
Awhile I rested on some grassy site ;
O Nature, Nature ! ne'er didst thou appear
At eventide more noble or more bright !
Snows donn'd their golden robes, like fire heav'n
shone ;
Echo'd the flow'ry hills, the woods sang gay ;
Amid the unison my voice alone
Was hush'd, because my heart was far away.

When nightfall came, the shepherd's family
Made room for me their lowly hearth beside ;
With smiles the youthful maiden, fair to see,
A bowl of hospitable milk supplied ;
Then harp-notes bade the social band rejoice,
I felt the sweetness of each melting lay ;
But in those mountain-choruses my voice
Was wanting, still my heart was far away.

Ere the day broke, 'mong barren wilds of stone,
The fearless hunter's track I dar'd pursue :
I gazed upon those beauties rarely known,
Where to the glacier heaven lends its hue.
Yet, from yon tow'ring precipice, in vain
Mine eye embrac'd the grand divine display ;
Ever within Silence maintain'd her reign,
Ever my changeless heart was far away.

And yet, whilom, what time a mountain-throng
Came to some festival of magic spell,
Hung ever on my lips the ready song,
Or echoing chorus with triumphant swell :
Yes, to my care-free voice, the woods, the streams,
The hills, the flow'rs, were dear that earlier day ;
But now it rests in silence 'mid such themes ;
Now, now, my pensive heart is far away.

Grion, 1838.

XIV.

ON OCCASION OF A DISTANT VOYAGE.

TO A FRIEND WHO WAS STARTING FOR AMERICA.

O NATIVE sky ! to me still sweet,
When at your feet the winter lies,
Ye icy peaks, by morning lit,
High altars whence our vows arise !
Far hid behind a sombre veil,
Your azure beauty seems to dwell :
Ah ! ere I part, I bid ye hail :
 Sky of my fathers ! fare thee well !

What means to part ? when Nature true,
For me has furnish'd boons so high ?
When on the lake, in spring-tide blue,
Still floats my young nest 'neath the sky ?
Fledglings, secure upon thy shores,
To parent birds their wishes tell :
I fain must seek thy banks no more :
 Waves of my fathers ! fare ye well !

Banks of my childhood ! go I must :
Take one day's tears, I've nought beyond.
Across the main, what idle trust
Could cheat a love so sadly fond ?
Thou cloud-veil hung by morning breeze,
Vines gilding each warm upland swell,
Old minster, mansions dark with trees,
Land of my fathers ! fare thee well !

Yet doubly sad ! if all were reft,
If no regret to mine replied,
If Death's voracious scythe had left
Nothing of mine the grave beside ! . . .
Friends, brethren, mother, now I leave :
Oh ! use for me Prayer's potent spell ;
Me, whom a strange roof shall receive.
Home of my fathers ! fare thee well !

Who knows ? who knows if one day yet
I see you all together here ?
But if my tomb near you be set,
What reck's it, or in ocean drear ?
God keeps for us, on heavenly ground,
A port : our Hope's oars thither strain ;
Tow'rd the same heritage we're bound.
Friends, fare ye well ! to meet again !

XV.

THE HUNTER'S WIFE.

'NEATH the sun's midday rays while the high glacier
gleams,
And a light cloud scuds o'er its white petrified streams,
From its crown drooping downward dark drap'ry sublime,
'Mid those solitudes cold see a woman up climb,
Where the steeps are less savage, the snow she treads o'er,
And the rocks she has leapt, are regarded no more.

Twenty years old ! yet goes she thus lonely along !
These wilds to attempt needs her soul must be strong ;
That her young foot has borne her so high up, I ween,
Needs the love that upbore her most potent have been.
Now and then she stands still, and her mute look surveys
The white icy steps peeping out 'neath the haze.

Or anon from the height the cry long-drawn and shrill,
The cry only known to the mountaineer's skill,

She flings as she turns : 'tis rehears'd by yon peak,
O'er the mountains flies each repetition more weak.
For some voice that will answer her heart waits and sighs,
But from out the deep vault Echo only replies.

More sorrowful now as she hies on her way,
Some hope in her heart had expir'd, you'd say ;
—Can this be the moment, ah ! Joseph, declare,
By thy lingering absence my bosom to tear ?
When yet hardly two short months have hallow'd our love,
These eight days on the mountains thou choosest to rove.

Be the chamois, whose chase draws thee onward, unblest !...
(On a sudden a dark thought then troubled her breast.)
—No, no, it cannot be, the season is clear,
Thy foot never fail'd thee upon the glacier ;
Then forward, and doubtless ere day have declin'd,
My own truant hunter, thy track we shall find !—

Yet the path evermore where her tender foot strides,
Seems less and less yielding ; the mountain's steep sides
Stretch upward away tow'rd the summit so drear,
Or with rapid descent in the void disappear.
And the horror-struck eye plunges downward in haste,
To the dark lake that sleeps in the midst of the waste.

At her feet in the hollow the scar'd raven wheels,
But the wife of the hunter no shuddering feels ;

No dizziness wild o'er her brain dares to glance
From his ominous flight ; nought can stay her advance :
By a light pine-staff aided, her footsteps still pass,
On, on, never fearing the fatal crevasse.

But why all at once is she motionless grown ?
With a red track of blood, drops the ice is bestrown ;
—Yes, I know it right well, it is here ! was her cry,
This very same spot has my hunter pass'd by ;
His chamois is wounded, this blood is the proof.
Ho there, Joseph !—he surely is not far aloof.

She is gazing around . . . Heaven shield her from woe !
Fresh tokens of death she discovers below.
All alone on the snow, near a fathomless crack,
Lies a musket well-known : close beside, too, the track
Of an iron-shod foot, where yet slipp'ry it is,
Shows the last fruitless struggle to 'scape the abyss.

If by chance, at a season in summer-tide hot,
With huge bounds o'er your pathway an avalanche shot
Unforeseen, or before you a thunderbolt fell
From a sky all serene, yet the cry you'd scarce tell
Wrung at once from a bosom, whence Hope was all flown,
At the sight, or how sad and heart-rending the tone.

Forthwith o'er the wide-gaping grave as she stoops,
Down the voiceless abyss her distracted eye swoops :

All trembling, alone, on the wild snowy floor,
She utters the name, name so sweet heretofore,
To the hollow recess that sinks back in the gloom ;
But alas ! deaf and silent the ice-vaulted tomb.

In the pitiless depths of the glacier grim
For all that lies swallow'd, inquire not of him !
More savage seems Death, amid heights so forlorn ;
'Neath the blow, wretched woman, too hard to be borne,
On these perilous steeps, how canst linger so late ?
Day is flying ; unaided, what must be thy fate ?

Yes, unvaried Despair, bending thus on her knees,
Writ by turns on the sky and th' abyss while she sees,
The last rosy tints on the height have grown pale,
Even now, like a winding-sheet, spreads o'er the vale,
The darkness that ever with ev'ning descends,
And Night o'er the mountains her chilly breath sends.

Next morning, when daylight th' horizon peer'd o'er,
When the world, like a swarm, now was stirring once more,
When the brilliantest sun of a season so fair,
Woke heaven, plain, mountains, and all with its glare,
On a corpse in the icy wild vainly it shone,
Near a half-open gulph, that was sleeping alone.

XVI

PLAN-NÉVÉ

I.

Tow'nd the dim châtelets, led by the close of the day,
Draw the herds, step by step, as they graze by the way;
Comes the cow to yield up, from her udder opprest,
All the stores for which early the caldron was drest.
But already the sun with his glory has pass'd
'Neath a cloud-veil, long-while for his setting amass'd.

To the north, above all, in the blue sky shines yet,
Like a castle of fairies, Diableret set,
With its battlements gilded, and towers, and dome;
While the clouds, with their dull tints, o'er Muverand come,
And with drapery clothe it, as, sombre and proud,
It uprears a brow crown'd with a mist-woven shroud.

At the heav'n's low'ring aspect the woodcutter wise,
From his work laid aside to his cot's shelter hies;

But upon Plan-Névé now no tempest is fear'd :
Knows the owner right truly the worth of his herd ;
Never cattle so many or thriving he own'd,
'Neath such plenty of milk ne'er his caldron has groan'd.

Wont of old 'mid these pastures as ruler to tread,
Lifts the mountaineer Abram his grizzly-hair'd head
Higher far than his fellows ; for Time's fatal touch,
Which can even the rocks sap, and rend in its clutch,
Ne'er was able from him that proud fierceness to rend,
Or that tameless disdain for the poor with no friend.

In his brow overhanging Pride constantly plays ;
With a glance of impatience the shepherds he sways ;
And his voice, ever grumbling, is heard to upbraid
With a curse the slow foot of exterior aid :
For the smallest delay serves his wrath to arouse,
And toward the earth never his yielding will bows.

But a light is the flash of the thunder, no more !
All his cattle are in ; he, the hearth-blaze before,
Stands with uncover'd arms in the frothing milk thrust,
And reviving the fire overlaid with grey dust,
Glad to-day sees his milk o'er the brim flow away,
In the vat which already was full yesterday.

Now, howe'er, at the door rise these accents of woe :
—" Upon me, pray good master, your kindness bestow !

For a woman, too strong is the tempest, alas !
Very treach'rous the path in this darkness to pass ;
Even now is the storm-rocking mountain unsafe ;
Blessed God ! . . . till to-morrow a lodging vouchsafe !”

With her hand on the door-sill, bow'd low to her feet,
On these dismal heights, shelter a crone would entreat.
—“ What ? . . . art begging up here ! on thy way go,
begone !

Birds of night, such as thou art, the dark seldom shun.”—
And the wretch, while the lightning diffused a dull light,
By a gesture points out, ah ! the wild and the night.

—“ Have a pity !—age, master, fatigue will create . . .”
—“ Go ! begone on thy way ! why didst set out so late ?
Both the night and the storm too you might have foreseen.”
—“ Good my lord, when I left 'twas but day-dawn, I ween ;
I have walk'd all the day : O my God ! I'm so old !”
—“ Hence, I say ! and to weary me make not so bold !”

But the crone at these words on her knees weeping falls,
And at this cruel threshold for mercy still calls !
Then the old shepherd Matthew, all mov'd by her fears,
While the threats of the hurricane thrill'd though his ears,
Cannot witness her sorrow and yet silence keep.

—“ Master, pity ! some hay by the hearth you can
heap . . .”

—“ Who, then, ventures to speak when he should silent be ?
Pray for how long has any been wiser than me ?”

—“ Master, dark is the night ; master, dark is the sky ;
The ravine this is hardly a season to try ;
And if hence, spite her tears, she by you shall be driv’n,
For the loss of a soul you must reckon to Heav’n.”

—“ Ah ! then you too would lodge, where the wind is so
strong !
Out of here ! hence ! begone ! with the witch go along ! ”
To the doorway he drags him, he thrusts him before ;
Then against him with bars and bolts closing the door,
With foul curses he follows them both on their way,
And to Night with its stormy risks yields them a prey.

II.

At the door now is silent all suppliant pray’r ;
For the shepherd, whom darkness twofold could not scare,
Far as Vore the old beggar engages to guide,
Who his steps hugs to ’scape the abyss close beside :
O’er the slippery pathway, made wet by the cloud,
’Mid the bare rocks the icy wind bellows aloud.

But our mountaineer noble, whose heart pity mov’d,
To his aged companion a timely help prov’d :
—“ For your years,” said he, failing to hide his alarm,
“ Very rude is the mountain, the sky fraught with harm ;
But survive it we shall. Let me hold your hand hard . . .
If the pathway be not by the hurricane barr’d.”

—“ List !” she answers, and bids her conductor to stand,
All amaz’d at the tone, strong and full of command,
That envelopes her voice so alarm’d hitherto ;
“ List ! thy safety from death to thy pity is due ;
To the châlets that nearest are haste down alone,
And to-morrow my grateful attention you’ll own.”

At these words from the shepherd, dumb-founded she shot,
At a pace in which weakness of age there was not ;
As she climb’d up the rocks, from the beaten path far,
Lost at length in the darkness and heaven-waged war,
Seem’d as though in the whirlwind’s embrace she were
borne,
Or some bolt for her track rapid furrow had torn.

But anon, in a halo of wonderful light,
On an eminent rock she again comes in sight ;
Round its summit in tiers lay the mist ev’ry way,
And unveil’d at her feet was unkind Plan-Névé.
Then the crone o’er her head spreading out unconfin’d
Her old mantle, that streams in the boisterous wind,

Both her arms o’er the uncover’d mount spreading high,
With the thunder’s roar mingles a terrible cry :
—“ Plan-Névé ! Plan-Névé ! lo ! from henceforth, again,
’Neath a bare icy cov’ring thy front shall remain ;
Never châlet of thine shall henceforth to its door
See the shepherd-folk coming at midsummer more.

Plan-Névé ! from henceforth shall no herd find its way
To thy pastures so fresh ; Plan-Névé ! Plan-Névé ! ”
And each word, on the wing of the tempest conveyed,
Made the châlets below with its hurly afraid ;
Where the heifer wide open'd her nostril and low'd,
And a stream of chill fear through the herdsman's breast
flow'd.

All had pass'd. And the rock, with its menacing form,
In a fresh mass of dark clouds was veil'd by the storm ;
'Mid the rocks, full of voices unknown, with a roar
Rush'd the hurricane on, blacker yet than before.
Then the heart of the churlish one, backward till now,
For the first time at length was perforce made to bow.

III.

Felt the old shepherd Matthew of dread a strange thrill ;
When alone left entirely, the crone's accents still
On the ear of his fancy long time were imprest ;
Then forthwith went he on, at her earnest request,
Toward Vare flying, spite of a night so unkind,
In its châlets a wiser asylum to find.

While the words of this woman his musings engross,
He has seen her the stages of rock stride across,
Till in cloud she is swallow'd ; and seems to discern,
'Mid the echoes around, words unfriendly and stern.
Heaven's wrath, 'tis said, ever on savageness fell ;
For his master he dreads a doom earn'd but too well.

The kind roof had he scarcely succeeded to gain,
And his stunn'd sense a moment was clearing again,
All at once a report rung of dreadfullest tone—
To its innermost base seem'd the mountain to groan:
Avalanches, streams, tempest, and thunderbolts hurl'd . . .
As it were the explosion and crash of a world.

Hover'd Night o'er these terrors that none might explore,
And when over these heights dawn'd the fresh morn once
more,
Plan-Névé ! Plan-Névé ! what a fearful night, thine !
Then the vale, on the gulph's edge once wont to incline,
Châlets, rich herds of kine, grassy pastures and all,
Lay in dull repose there 'neath a glacier-pall.

XVII.

AN ANNIVERSARY OF THE 17TH OF NOVEMBER, 1307.
OATH OF GRÜTLI.

It is Winter, his first blast our châlets among,
Of his mantles all chilly the lightest hath flung ;
Pines that under the snow their dark foliage keep,
Lie, with never a moan, on the white hills asleep,
And the while in the forest Death gathers them up,
Is the last leaf a falling, the last acorn-cup.

On the roofs of the hamlet, the mist cold and grey
Hovers now, now is spreading 'mid smoke-wreaths away,
From the mountaineer's hearth that so heavily mount.
Very desolate now the unvisited fount ;
And the door that was fasten'd, opes noiseless again,
To receive one at night-fall arriv'd from the plain.

Joys again the good father his household to view,
To which Morn heard him bid a reluctant adieu ;

And, the while he is seated, his girl young and fair,
At the fire an agreeable feast hastes to prepare ;
Whilst the eyes of the lads with glad eagerness glow
As they tell to each other the news from below.

Slow the new-comer courteous is not to relate
What the vintage has been, how the war speeds of late ;
Yet a sorrowful hue o'er his story is shed,
For the pastor, who taught them so lately, is dead :
Then each one felt some tear-drops his eyelids bedim,
For the parish would all go in mourning for him.

But from such thoughts the circle is suddenly stirr'd,
When a knock from some hand at the threshold is heard :
Rose, extending a lantern, draws near with a guess,
That some traveller there overta'en by distress
From the chill air of Night sought a shelter inside,
While her father himself hastes the door to set wide.

By a wandering ray from the lantern was shown
An old man, to the village quite strange and unknown ;
Save a young child, no other companion was there.
'Mid their way Night and Mist had come on unaware,
And the clear blazing light on the window that play'd,
Made him ask there for lodging and merciful aid.

But the old man his wants hardly utters through fear ;
—" Enter in," said the sire, " aged stranger, draw near !
You shall not go on further: what! vaward to go ! . . .
That would be to tempt God ; there is danger, I know :

Icy now is the path, and with fog deep the gloom . . .
Enter in ! 'neath my roof there is plenty of room."

Alike offer and language the old man's heart move,
Who replies, " God alone your requiter will prove !"
Coming forward he enters, the circle gaze nigher,
Both his reverend aspect and age to admire,
And the child's sweet fair features, so full of delight
To have scap'd thus at length from the rigours of night.

Soon from lads and their father the hearthstone beside,
He with curious questions a thousand was plied.
" I was born," he replies, "'cross yon blue mountain-screen,
And my true name is Hans—many lands have I seen ;
Now in search of a Winter less keen tend my feet
Tow'rd a fair lake I know, an asylum most sweet.

" This child, by name Joseph, my last grandson is ;
Want and age are but sombre companions, I wis ;
But he knows a few songs ; and 'mid neighbours of yore,
He the name of the young mountain-chorister wore."
And the while to each word of this talk she gave heed,
Rose made ready the table and spread it with speed.

In the front of a blaze, by fresh fagot reviv'd,
Sat the weary old man, from the time he arriv'd ;
Yet with hoar-frost adorn'd are his locks of white hair,
And his toil-harden'd knees feel the piercing cold air ;

But his forehead is open, his eyes sparkling roll,
And reveal the fresh youth of his innermost soul.

And a child is young Joseph, with eyes heav'nly blue ;
Dwells a soul, too, beneath that head flaxen, of hue
So pure, that all evil must fabulous seem,
And of love, only love in this world it can dream :
By his side, sweetly smiling, her seat Rose has plac'd,
That all round she may serve out the friendly repast.

There are large spoons of wood, a strange fretwork that
bore,
Rang'd about round a vessel with milk running o'er ;
And the mountaineer's loaf, and full many a cheese,
From the chalet brought down ere the Winter 'gan freeze,
Are display'd on the board 'neath the wondering eye,
While the pewter brimfull of new cyder stands by.

From this pleasant meal fresh life the agèd man earn'd,
And fresh thanks in a voice of emotion return'd :
—" I am blest, I am blest, 'neath your roof-tree this eve ;
With the love of their fatherland friendly hearts heave ;
And from these heights when daily goes forth the proud
view,
Well might love of a land so fair ever be new.

" This is, this, as you know, the great night of the year,
Of our freedom the birth-night, when tow'rd Heaven's ear,
Rose our forefathers' oath, that this prize without flaw
They would leave to their sons, spite the Eagle's sharp
claw ! "

—"Aye, I know it; for me to believe is not hard,
Aged Sir, of this tale I some memory guard."

Each among them, however, the old man that heard,
Felt a meaning mysterious belong to his word;
—"Guard we it in our bosoms," he said; "of old time,
I for my part have honour'd this season in rhyme;
These glories, at least, cannot ever deceive."
—"After supper, that song we will have, with your leave."

—"I am willing, kind host; and but just 'tis, indeed,
That of your friendly welcome my songs be the meed;
And beside, on this day with such memory grand,
Each heart that loves liberty needs must expand:
Joseph, you understand me, your voice, true and sweet,
Is rehearsing the tones for this festival meet."

—"Father, dear!" the child answers, "we have not a line
Among all of our hymns, as 'the Grütli' so fine,
Where the loud-sounding chorus re-echoes aloft
On the wild rocks; and still on that day I muse oft,
When, slow raising our voices tow'rd Heaven, we both
Join'd in singing them there, at the scene of the oath."

Stands the table at length thrust aside by fair Rose,
And the mountaineers all on their maple chairs close
Round the fresh blaze, that shows through its glimmerings
dun
How the châlet's one pipe in turn every one

Lights, and skilfully puffing the smoke-wreaths away,
Is attent to old Hans and his wide-renown'd lay.

In the midst of their circle, friends, picture we there
That little one, fresh-visag'd, flaxen of hair,
Who is held by the hand, 'twixt the pale old man's knees :
Lit by soul-fire common, their faces one sees
Shine with rays all commingled, as, turn'd to the skies,
Their blent voices in accents harmonious rise :—

When on the lake, star-mirror blue,
The latest blush of day had died,
Three white sails met my mountain view,
That o'er the waters skimm'd with pride :
With mutual hail that ev'ning fair,
Tow'rd one side floated all the three ;
But say, what breath conveys them there ?
It is the air of Liberty !

Whence is that cry ? The Alps' are stirr'd,
Is heard in air the spirit's tongue,
Where on their flanks, that clouds engird,
Pale flashes from his hand are flung :
Scar'd by that echoing murmur dull,
Amid the trance must herdsman lie ;
But no, of hope his voice is full :
It is the cry of Liberty !

Saw'st thou upon the pleasant sward
Our champions, a holy band ?

Hover'd above our bosom's lord,
The genius of Fatherland ;
When toward Heaven their pray'r took flight,
Each eye the future strain'd to see,
And 'neath the starry vault of night
They swore the oath of Liberty !

Ere long a thousand crossing rays,
Vict'ry's proud tokens, stream afar,
Scarce know the conqu'rors if yon blaze
Be mountain-fire or heav'n-set star :
Stoops holy Peace our plains upon,
And from that moment, constantly
'Mong us a radiant star hath shone;—
The new-born star of Liberty !

Still attentive were list'ning the charm'd mountaineers,
Though already the concord had died in your ears,
And their eyes, that seem'd larger thro' late keeping watch,
Op'd, as if the last sound in its echo to catch.
But the old Hans, yet dreaming of glories gone by,
Leaves the brilliant Past, and the Present brings nigh,
Then to Joseph makes signal, who, conscious again,
Joins in accents more mournful to take up the strain :—

And now, all starless is the sky,
And scatter'd from the distant bank
Alas ! more num'rous sails I spy :
Dim their horizon seems, and blank ;

For in safe haven all once more
Met ere the day-dawn would we see,
Needs must they ride some breeze before
Other than that of Liberty.

The last stanza was sung ; but the music sustain'd
As a sad sacred echo within them remain'd ;
With the Past blent the Future, as though in a dream,
While the hearth darkling sent a last flickering gleam ;
And as oft to and fro sway'd the up-darting flame,
On the circle all pensive a fix'd silence came.

Not a sound but the wind-moan, which all seem'd to heed ;
But the father, at length, from this reverie freed,
Cried, " I thank thee ! might all, agèd Sir, hear thy songs,
They would know how much love to their country belongs ;
Thus to sing, were it but for thy voice, one could tell,
Thus our Swiss-land to sing, one must love her as well ! "

Thereon grasp'd he the hand of the old man, who sigh'd,
— " Yes, I love her, 'tis true," in his turn he replied ;
" Ah ! that all might say so, be it giv'n from above !
What our country most needs is, the warm breath of love :
Nought is Liberty worth without this holy fire,
Which all Hope, Virtue, Goodness combine to require.

" Still some true hearts, like thee, there in Switzerland are,
Who yet reckon the virtues of old as their share ;

Safe with them will our treasure of piety rest,
Will for them be by God our old heritage blest :
And the spirit that prompted our forefathers' oath,
On their sons, too, to shower, is Heaven not loath !”

But repose now was urgent, for late the night grew ;
And with cinders the live coals were cover'd anew :
From the hanging lamp light struggled out 'mid the shade,
Upon last words that could not be longer delay'd :
And the child and the old man, outstretch'd on the ground,
Both at once in the cottage a welcome couch found.

And the while all around them each mist-hidden height
Without noise was in snow like a winding-sheet dight,
Be the blasts ne'er so wintry, the cold so intense,
'Neath the roof that afforded such peaceful defence,
Unto Heaven rose many a vow and a pray'r
For the land of the Swiss that Jehovah would care.

This piece, and the two foregoing ones, belong to the year
1838.

XVIII.

OUR FATHERS AND US.

VERSES READ AT A PATRIOTIC GATHERING, THE ANNIVERSARY DAY
OF THE BATTLE OF NÆFELS, APRIL 1839.

TIME was when I, poor poet, strange to fame,
One verse well-measur'd scarce had wit to frame;
My humble New-year's reckoned many a sin,
Though burn'd a sacred altar-fire within:
Heart-songs within me, in excess undue,
O'erflow'd the cup, nor law nor order knew;
And of this spirit-deluge, ev'ry song
Was reft of strength when issuing on my tongue.
But now, the metre skilfully I catch,
And two and two my rhymes, well-sorted, match;
Of verses I a master am, men say;
No bungle 'mid them suffer I to stray;
By me hiatus rare is pointed ill,
The Grand Art I can teach with vet'ran skill,
Fine verses with becoming pomp I spout;—
But at the source within I feel a drought.

Art is triumphant, but there's life no more ;
Those sweet waves flow not through me as of yore ;
Thrills that young harmony no more in me,
Which must, to words transferr'd, inferior be.

Pardon the leap, my friends ; 'tis bold, I own,
To pass from telling weakness all my own,
From a poor selfish personal regret,
To other themes whereon my heart is set.

Our fathers, sure, that hero-band of old,
Those free-born peasants, those Swiss warriors bold,
No doubt of glory little kenn'd,—that word
Amid their vulgar converse ne'er occur'd ;
None among them long-winded sermon knew
On love to Country or to Freedom due ;
At Næfels, e'en, where vines are almost none,
They would have ask'd what laurels they had won !
Poor folk were they, right poor in Rhet'ric's arts,
But rich of action, rich of noble hearts !
They could not, like their fond descendants, bide
Ancestral names to boast for valour tried ;
No words possess'd they, big and sounding loud,
Wherewith our weakness carefully we shroud ;
Not words—but of the thing they had supply,
For they could love, defend themselves, and die !

Come, visit Næfels' field : a shepherd-band
In rustic garb around their banner stand,

And at the frontier wait the conqu'ring foe,
Whose flags of strange device afar off flow.
Behold the knightly host arm'd cap-à-pié,
Troopers and cuirassiers, their vet'rans see,
Bristling with arms of thousand kinds come on ;
All hope, all hope from Glaris' men is gone ! —

— Not yet, proud lords ! The mountain clansmen form
And show'r below like hail their flinty storm ;
Steeds are o'erthrown ; they charge ; they press amain ;
The field is theirs ; — redoubled blows they rain :
On, on, they reach the lake ; their foes that flee
Drink of the flood : — their Fatherland is free.
Then, to the Saints, in pray'r these shepherd-ranks,
For this rude labour, rudely wrought, give thanks.
Brave race ! for their own homes they thus had fought.
No one among them other combats sought ;
Their exploits ended, scarce they boasted e'er ;
Heroes, unconscious heroes, all, they were !

This grand old exploit brings before my eye
Some triumphs of debate won recently,
Where we, perchance, have greater glory earn'd,
If by loud cheers true glory be discern'd.
To beat of drum let but some gay parade
Along a frontier easily be made,
Long it suffices ; tales of pompous phrase,
A thousand brags the high achievement praise.

—Safety to you the fed'rate Cantons owe ;
You're brave, I grant, but need not seem to know !
Must our own pens proclaim us heroes all,
Because we heed precisely Duty's call ?
Must ocean east and west, by trumpet-blast,
Be warn'd that hence all honour has not past,
Silence 'neath wrongs that Swiss-land cannot hold,
And that her children's hearts are still unsold ?
The fame that arms bestow from you be far !
Think of our forefathers, so great in war,
Of speech unknowing, who could act so well ;
—Deeds heart-inspired no boastful tongues will tell !—

But you, brave friends, who vanity deride,
Of whom each knows the worth of sounding pride,
And 'neath the surface fair our weakness reads,
Come, for the lost old temper don your weeds !
Sempach's or Næfels' fights invoke not ye
A trophy for th' unworthy sons to be ;
Oh ! rather for those feasts reserve some tears !
Let others sound their pæns in your ears !
Let them applause of bold Helvetia prate,
Who ne'er to foreign conqu'ror op'd her gate,
And who, when insult in her face is thrown,
Fain would her heart's blood current still make known.

We, too, will weep its rareness, if a boast
Be due to courage, when not wholly lost.

To weep we've cause, if, in this modern age,
Sublimar conflict none is found to wage ;
To weep, if Switzerland can only give
Duties neglected not for deeds that live ;
To weep, if needs it must be wondrous thought
That we our fathers' name have sullied not.

XIX.

TO M. OLIVIER.

To welcome thee we all are gather'd here,
Thou art the hero of this festal day ;
To sing thy praise, our Master-poet dear,
Thy voice I fain would borrow for my lay.
Say, how can I, poor footman in your train,
Keep by your car victorious as it goes ?
But love for you no doubt can fire the strain
Out of my heart a song of gladness flows !

Come hither ! all these friends belong to you ;
To rally round you is their circle fain ;
Your knowledge of it ought to be most true :
It is by love another's love we gain.
Ever united by Hope's common tie,
And, more than you, touch'd by your private woes,
To keep you here among us we rely
Out of our hearts a song of gladness flows !

Behold again this bank, so dearly known,
The magic crescent of this princely lake !
Hereafter all that makes a land your own
Holds you enchain'd by ties that cannot break :
Beyond our waters mountain-fram'd, to thee
Nothing to sigh for other lands disclose :
The flow'r of May makes fragrant ev'ry lea
Out of our hearts a song of gladness flows !

Your lyre of late, still owning our behest,
Was with new ditties wont to cheer us on ;
Wherefore already should it idle rest ?
The heav'ns shine young and calm as e'er they shone,
The Muse ne'er reckons Autumn's chilling breath,
Its spring and flow'rs the spirit ever knows ;
For you still Switzerland has many a wreath
Out of our hearts a song of gladness flows.

14th May, 1839.

XX.

TO MY WELL-BELOVED ONES.

FOR THE NEW YEAR.

Erlangen, Christmas 1839.

MY DEAR RELATIVES,

Here comes my usual New-year's letter; unfortunately it is expected to be more interesting, more witty, more affectionate than any other: whereas with me, if it is to be anything more than ordinary, it is in being more sorrowful; not only on account of the sentiments awakened by the present returning season and accomplishment of time, during these days alike of Hope and Recollection, but also by a general feeling of profound melancholy, coupled with the effect of the winter and bad weather upon my health. I have been in a truly restless state; during long hours of solitude, in which I could not even compose myself to read, I have had time to scoop myself out, not "sabots" but tomb-stones; On occasion of these anniversaries, these days of domestic and social joy, I have been on the point of burying myself deeper than ever: every one's joy

was a burden to me, and this Christmas Eve, you can understand how weighty the burden must be S—— had kept his room, but was resolved not to forego his philological reading ; so I returned home, alone, and with all around looking horribly black. I heard the cries of joy, the hum of the townspeople, who, almost without exception, were circulating through the streets and about the market-place ; I asked myself the reason of *their* being so joyful. It is because they have the happiness of receiving joyful gifts, or bestowing them on their friends ; well, though I receive none, at any rate I can bestow some. That thought saved me. And so it is, in such moments of profound melancholy within, if one can succeed in getting out of one's egotistical self, and going forth actively towards others, the point is gained. I ran to the market (it may seem a piece of childishness, but it was anything but that) ; I bought a packet of gingerbread, and made a present of part to Mrs. B——'s little girls ; with what was over I made two packets, sealed them well, and sent them to B—— and S——, each accompanied with a poetical letter, the latter of which strove to prove the philological value of the present I was making him. Then I went to the "Golden Heart," where I found three poor lads, who, like myself, had nothing better to do than to come there and quietly drink a glass of beer. I took the liberty of offering them a small bowl of

punch, and then was able to retire to rest tolerably satisfied. Early next morning one of the little girls came to wake me, in order to see the tree and the candles; I recognised my gingerbread among a crowd of other beautiful presents—I received the customary *dank ihnen* and little curtesy—and was altogether satisfied.

My wish in this letter was, while addressing you all, to give each their peculiar share; but, alas! I see that hitherto I have only spoken of myself again and again—contrary, however, to my principles of hygiene;—but they will all see, alike relatives and friends, that I bear them all on my sickly heart. Often during these last days have I sung the romance of Millevoie; I did not say '*gens de la chaumière,*' but '*gens de ma patrie.*' There I am, falling back again! Now, don't misunderstand my state of mind; it is not home-sickness at any rate, or if it is, only indirectly so. You will well comprehend what it is I am in want of, after yourself; I comprehend, too: why have I not the energy to *seize* it? Why, because when the heart is laid thoroughly bare and unemployed, then it is we feel the great sore, the great void which *One Alone* can fill, void which we have experienced at all times, but which only at certain moments we are permitted to see with the veil removed.

I send you some lines, which I have indulged myself in composing, and which in no slight degree have contributed to my recovery:—

New-year already ? Modest Harp, come nigh
From the strange willows where I hung thee by !
We'll try thy string, we'll try if yet there stays
Some feeble echo of thy olden lays !
But, ah ! where are the loves that then inspir'd ?
Where are those treasures, all my heart requir'd ?
Far, very far ! — yet own attractive charm ;
At least in song their sweetness we'll embalm.

I know not if my spirit took her flight,
Or how ; but home from work return'd to-night,
Methought I saw, in front, on the arm-chair,
A woman, in a well-known corner there ;
Fix'd for a moment near the faithful wheel
She seem'd to stand, then careful glances steal,
And for some missing object round her pry, —
The next she wiped a tear-drop from her eye,
(At such a tender sight my pulses beat) :
A young man ent'ring now, long held his seat
Before her silent ; — then I heard her say,
“ To-night what does my poor child far away ? ”
What does he ? see ! from far he seeks anew
Gladness and health by recollecting you :
Yes, with a new chord he his harp has strung,
To let you know the word his heart has sung. —

— O tie well-belov'd, that from Infancy's age
Around our hearts God himself hath entwin'd,
Companion unfailing of Life's pilgrimage,
Whose mem'ry alone can the prodigal bind !

Thou from ancientest times, spite of Abel's sad groan,
Till these days whereon Havock and Doubting have
frown'd,
Alike in king's seat and rude cabin, alone
On the altar of human affection art found !

O family love ! of all loves the most pure !
O'er our first steps thou wontest such sweetness to roll ;
And still, amid grief, doth thy radiance endure,
Bending over our last bed—be blest in my soul !

Be thou blessèd on earth ! thou, that knewest to dawn
On my spirit, sole star, and the dark veil pierce through
By the sorrowful night of my loneliness drawn ;
Pole-star of my voyage, and the end I pursue !

Be thou blessèd in heaven ! thou pious idea,
Whence I learn that my eyes I may lift up on high,
That no boundary to Love sets Infinity e'er,
And we children a Father possess in the sky !—

Alas ! some kindred source I greatly need,
For such a touching cause my verses plead,
Dumb since she left you, you awoke my tongue ;
Sweet bird, in exile, she forgot her song.
E'en where I am, at but a thought of home,
These tender pictures all before me come,
They clothe the pensive day, they all shine clear.
My country first, then too that household dear,

This land so fair, that, when it wins our love,
We love none else : this lake with hills above,
That like a vision high floats by us now ;
Alps, holy altars of our ev'ry vow !
Those secret vales, where quiv'ring branches gleam,
Those cots, on ancient virtue where we dream,
Those hearts with whom we shared our little all,
Those friends that answer not, as once, our call . . .
Alas ! I've all review'd. But when my breast,
Yearning, reflects that, spite of Love's request,
This New Year finds me exil'd far from you . . .
— Grant, grant, O God ! that glad we meet anew !

XXI.

AN ANNIVERSARY PIECE.

BIRTH, Life, and Death —'tis all the fate of man,
Our Being's myst'ry, God's predestin'd plan ;
All that we were, and are, and shall become,
Three syllables comprise — How small the sum !

But if an endless Future's germ outgrows
From the dark moment whence Existence flows,
If our endeavours seek no chance design ;
And each beginning hath a term divine ;
If down the stream of Time our shallop gain,
Hope sitting at the helm, th' Eternal main ;
If dreaded Death be but a second Birth ;
The road to Heav'n — no more — this lower Earth ;
If endless Life take up expiring Time,
Sole matchless hour, that strikes no second chime ;
If Love's a day of bliss, not suffering ;
Then Life, brief word ! yes, Life — How great a thing !

July 12, 1840.

XXII.

THE RETURN.

Lov'd hills and sacred shores ! how could I sing
What time I said the touching word, Adieu ?
The bird that from our country's coasts takes wing,
Till home return'd will not his song renew :
Unfailing visitor ! though dumb for long,
Clear note and rustling wing his greeting make.—
Gone are the dreams that to past days belong,
If my return my voice can fail to wake.

Near palaces, where Love can none inspire,
(Our shepherds' huts my choice far more esteems)
I, like the Hebrew captive, hung my lyre
On the green willow-boughs of stranger-streams.
Thou lake-breeze, tow'rd my landing borne along,
Thou breath of May, wherein my sailyards shake !
Gone are the dreams that to past days belong,
If this spring-tide my voice can fail to wake.

There, there below, fond Hope was wont to say !

The world is large, our hearts still larger are.

Pleasure, Success, Love, Honour, and Display,

Go, seek, discover, count thy treasure far !

But wearied soon these truant ways among,

Back to first loves the heart its way will take ;

Gone are the dreams that to past days belong,

If my return my voice can fail to wake.

And yet who knows, no change hath pass'd upon,

No false way wilder'd all we lov'd before !

The heart of Friendship is unchang'd alone,

Outstretch'd her hand, her cup still brimming o'er ;

Besides her crown deck'd with a flow'ry throng,

Sweet Autumn-fruits she ripens for our sake :

Ah ! gone the dreams that to past days belong,

If ye, my friends, my voice can fail to wake.

May 1841.

XXIII.

A SPRING SONG.

Now for us the Spring
Her chaplet doth fling,
And ev'ry treasur'd sweet ;
Now over the mead,
With fresh flowers bespread,
Wander our joyous feet.

See, the face smooth and clear
Of the rippling mere,
The bank's green foliage through !
See the mountain beyond,
My companion fond,
Shine in the fields of blue !

From thy window hast spied,
How, at even-tide,
Each gorgeous colour fades ?
Hast thou felt with perfume,
How the lilac bloom
The plain's soft breathing lades ?

Oh ! the heart, in the spring
Sweet and free opening,
Is it not upward rapt ?
'Tis mystery all
Wherewith as a pall
The dreamy earth is lapp'd.

But than Nature's self here,
So majestic and clear,
Than all yon tinted skies ;
Than the azure-hued wave,
Deep, deep as the grave,
And hills that proudly rise ;

Than the wandering sigh
Of the zephyr borne by
To this long curtain-fold,
Love I more, 'mid the flow'rs
Of rosy bow'rs,
Thy bright eye to behold :

Yes, all lov'd ones above,
How I love thee ! I love
Thy smiles that sweetly win—
That life-giving smile,
Which like wine doth beguile,
And makes a heav'n within.

May 1841.

XXIV.

FRAGMENT.

I SAW the mountain's lofty jags,
And glacier-ridge untill'd of men ;
Cull'd rose and lily 'neath the crags,
Quaff'd cream in châteaux of the glen :
Then twice I saw, at set of sun,
With vermeil tints the snow-beds burn ;
But 'mid such marvels I'm but one,
All is so fine ! for love I yearn.

The torrent murmurs in mine ear,
The birch roars in the ev'ning blast ;
The moon in heaven pure and clear,
By Muveran's dark flank hath pass'd.
Upon our hills the nights are fair,
Nought tempts us from their charms to turn ;
I dream of her t' enjoy them there ;
All is so fine ! for love I yearn.

Les Plans, July 1841.

XXV.

THE ROSE WITHOUT A THORN.

FRUITLESSLY sought by man besides,
Upon our rocks there sweetly hides,
'Bove gold or silver valued high,
A treasure wealth can never buy.
Is it some mine, the light beyond,
Of dainty gem or diamond?—
No! 'tis beneath the sun's eye born,
And blooms—the rose without a thorn.

Fair flow'r! who can thy influence flee,
Or by thy spells unconquer'd be?
Pluck thee—anon, succeeds regret,
Joy is extinct, and eyes are wet.
Some dart, in secret ambush, arms
Each flower of divinest charms;
Come only to our heights forlorn,
And find the rose without a thorn!

.

See, the young heart with love that glows,
Has cheeks all blushing like the rose ;
And yet too soon in that bright hour
The thorn anticipates the flow'r.
Thou secret bliss, for which we sigh !
Pain waits upon thee ever nigh :
Alone in heav'n's breeze high-upborne,
Blossoms the rose without a thorn.

Ah ! from that Alpine bed refrain
To take and plant it in the plain ;
There, like each sister-rose, ere while
With young thorns will it mock your toil,
Or 'mid those lower hills grow old,
And die at length in the soft mould !
Only yon steep, that tow'rs in scorn,
Can boast the rose without a thorn.

Oh ! might I, master of my lot,
Choose the dear rose on some high spot,
Then free from ev'ry other care
I'd come the morn and fix me there ;
While airs divine breath'd odours by,
I'd pitch my tent so near the sky,
And, sipping honey, ne'er be torn
Far from my rose without a thorn !

Les Plans, July 1841.

XXVI.

FALLING ASLEEP IN SPRING.

UNDRAW the curtain, mother ! for the sun is rising fast,
And across my bed comes darting in its glittering rays at
last.

The day is come to chase from me the evil dreams of night,
And the early spring-tide morning, how soft it is and
bright !

From above the yoke-elm hedge the snowy mountains can
be seen,
Yet the vineyard and the meadow are beginning to look
green ;
Last night I heard the singing of the young girls in their
glee,
Beneath the growing shadow of our noble walnut-tree.

With the spring-tide, too, the juicy sap mounts up the tree
again,
And runs through young and old alike, circling each tiny
vein ;

I see the daisies peeping up their pearly heads on high,
And the breeze, all fresh and healthful, comes toward me
where I lie.

To where I'm lying, mother!—yet, abroad seems finer day!
And happy they who, free from pain, can gaily step away!
Last year I sallied forth for thee, pale primroses to cull
Beside the brook, and now, I ween, of blossoms they are
full.

'Twas all so very lovely! and we thought but little then,
What a change would have come o'er me, ere the spring-
hours came again;
Last spring I planted out with flow'rs your garden and
my own,—
Your flow'rs you'll soon be planting around my burial-
stone!—

The year, it has its spring-time, its sunny hours, and
bright;
And why should my life's morning have less that's young
and light?
With tender love and gladness it might ripen and bear
fruit,
Must it be stifled in the bud ere it has scarce ta'en root?

Oh! this delicious morning!—yet here long I may not be,
And perchance this glorious sunrise is the last that I
shall see.

Dear mother, for the love of God, close up the window there;
For the spring, the sun, the flow'rs, are more than I can
bear!

What makes the swallow 'neath the roof still pipe its
joyous song,
Whilst here I only groan and sigh the weary hours along?
Now flush'd with heat, now icy cold, on my fev'rish bed
of pain!
I cannot see the friends who come, pray send them back
again!

Alas! how cruel seem to one all objects which suggest
That on the prime of our young days Death's chilly hand
is prest!
My friends may think to calm my grief—but little can
they know,
The dying scarcely can be sooth'd by those they leave
below.

Do not hide yourself, dear mother, I can bear to see you
weep;
We will weep and pray together, ere yet I fall asleep;
Whilst the blessed spring is breaking fast, awak'ning all
once more,
Can the hour of Death have struck for me?—Yes, Jesu!
all is o'er!

Nay, brother ; be of cheerful hope !—all is not over yet,
Thou art happy in thy slumbers, and we'll dry our eyelids
wet !

All is not over, brother ! for thy spring-time's dawning
hours

No noontide heat shall wither, no July fade its flowers ;

The birds shall with one ceaseless song pour out their
notes of praise,

And with no break the stream flow on of purer, happier
days ;

One season of eternal youth—one everlasting spring !
—Oh ! blessed time ! without the mists which earthly
Autumns bring !

May 1841.

XXVII.

BENEATH THE PINE

WHENE’ER I sit me ’neath the Pine,
Dreamy and sad the lonesome hours,
Then ev’ning’s gloom and morning’s shine
All are forgot, e’en meadow flow’rs,
Beneath the Pine.

I hear, ’mid branches of the Pine,
How aye the wind’s low breathing creeps,
Ever its ceaseless hymns repine,
Harp of the woods that sings and weeps
Beneath the Pine.

I see the sky beneath the Pine,
Athwart the sombre foliage,
Where winter’s blasts all vainly whine,
And meditate on wintry age
Beneath the Pine.

Ah ! then, methinks, beneath the Pine,
The meadow flow’rs are passing fair,

But only last one morning fine ;
We'll seek the charms that endless are
Beneath the Pine.

Fain would I veil me, like the Pine,
Under a foliage austere,
And while my steps tow'rd Heav'n incline,
Leave but my shadow only here
Beneath the Pine.

For I have heard, beneath the Pine,
All mortal glory's to the heart
But a vain dream, and must recline
One day without it; all apart,
Beneath the Pine.

Thou, then, who comest 'neath the Pine,
Regard me not with lavish smile!
And give me that soft hand of thine :
I but one word will say the while
Beneath the Pine !

Believe, believe me, 'neath the Pine !
Thou know'st my spirit's love for thee ;
But may our love, itself divine,
Propp'd by Almighty Pillar be
Beneath the Pine.

Les Plans, July 1841.

XXVIII.

SOUTH WINDS, BLOW !

SOMBRE mists our mountains veil !
Yonder rocks and woods wrap o'er ;
Blow through heav'n, thou stormy gale,
As within my heart of yore !
Old and new prints in the dust
Blot alike out as I go !
In eternal love I trust ;
Pass along, ye south-winds ! blow !

But the dull mists on the height
Earth alone, not Heaven hide :
Heaven's depths suffus'd with light,
Paler make the world beside.
I, with holy madness fir'd,
Chase my lov'd birds soaring so ;
On its stalk the flow'r hangs tir'd ;
Pass along, ye south-winds ! blow !

In the cloud, devoid of fear,
See ! yon hawk, from earth remote ;
Hark ! adown from the glacier
Sudden avalanches float :
That that soars, and this that sinks,
Seem our destiny to show !
Endless life's no dream, methinks :
Pass along, ye south winds ! blow !

And if, transiently enshrin'd
In some green o'ershadowing grot,
I should think on earth to find
Promis'd bliss, or ills forgot ;
Tempest-winds, I bid ye rouse !
Leaf on leaf successive strow !
Only Heav'n shall shield our brows ;
Pass along, ye south-winds ! blow !

July 1841.

XXIX.

A NOSEGAY FROM CLARENS.

Muse, lève les yeux ! ce soir, ce soir encore
L'étoile au ciel serein nous sourit en tremblant :
L'astre des chants d'amour qui luit jusqu'à l'aurore.
Baigne de ses rayons mon front plein et brûlant.
Livre ta chevelure au souffle qui s'élève,
Viens ! prends ta harpe d'or et donne-moi ta main,
Pour ta couronne, allons cueillir dans notre rêve
Les fleurs dont le printemps a bordé le chemin.

Of my sad parting hour I am list'ning the chimē,
And both you and these fair scenes to quit it is time.
Let me cull you the flowers to Autumn that stay,
For a nosegay the sweetest, the choicest I may.
Let me cull you these gifts, the lone track passing o'er ;
Without you will their charms fade to freshen no more ;
For of earth do not flowers the love ever seem,
Just as love of our spirit the flower we deem ?

THYME AND WILD-THYME.

I am the flow'r that all men praise ;
To deck me, where my sisters blow,
I neither tints nor graces show.
But when the Morn's breath o'er me plays,
Passing tow'rd you on pinions fleet,
Is it not then more fresh, more sweet ?
And in the thicket's darkling maze
Does not the scent that lures you, tell
Of a pure heart's attractive spell ?

ROSE.

When on the hill you see me there,
Laden with odours brightly shine,
My sister, of the thorn beware,
Or closely shut that heart of thine !

DAISY.

Daisies all undefiled,
With their large eyes awake,
Bid you welcome, fair child,
Of their blossoms to take.

See, the leaflets away
By the wind scatter'd fly,
And, he loves me, they say, . . .
Maybe, 'tis but a lie.



E'en my tombstone above
Will the daisy arise;
Though it whisper'd, I love,
Just as I, the bloom dies.

FORGET-ME-NOT.

In Spring-tide of my leaves a crown they weave,
Too late for me the sun his radiance shot;
To see his Autumn only I had leave;
Content, ah! with the pittance I receive,
Until the Winter comes, forget-me-not!

BLUE-BELL.

'Tis I the sweet bell own,
There all alone
Beneath the sombre chestnut-tree;
When Autumn breezes sing,
You hear me ring
Morning and ev'ning, o'er the lea.

I tinkle in the bow'r,
Waking that hour
When mounts the sun th' horizon's rim;
Flies o'er my cup the bee,
Humming with glee,
And I my honey give to him.

In nightly revels eke,
Gruffer I speak,
Utt'ring with love my tinkling sound ;
And fairies I can hear,
And elves draw near,
With muffled voices, to dance round.

Dreamy and graceful I,
As you pass by,
Seem for th' angelus' to toll :
Wherefore, my fair young friend,
Dost thou not lend
Thine ear to me ? oh ! sleep-bound soul !

POMEGRANATE.

What though spot of earlier South-winds than sweet
Clarens there be none,
Yet by Alpine heights 'tis temper'd, placèd thus their
shade below ;
So whene'er with purple-tinted fire my cups shine in
the sun,
Should there be who fain th' attraction of these
burning charms would shun,
Let him breathe from off the mountain's winds that
pure and icy blow.

IVY.

See how firmly I cling to your time-honour'd hall,
How I deck and support ev'ry porch and old wall,

Which their age and their winters deface :
Holy Friendship nor Death knows nor passing away ;
With my evergreen boughs I, where'er there's decay,
Upward mount with a loving embrace.

VERVAIN.

You, perchance, the vervain know,
With its leaves of green so sweet ;
'Neath the window doth it grow,
And its perfume spreading so,
Should your senses mount to greet.

Plant for witchcraft known right well,
Erst unto magician dear !
When assaulted by its smell,
I some snare, against whose spell
I am pow'rless, often fear.

'Twill not be the first, I guess,
We have seen bring misery !
Hear the pray'r of my distress !
If you are the sorceress,
Of my poor heart, tender be !

MYRTLE.

Bloom pink and white, in sombre foliage drest,
Exquisite perfume ! 'tis of Love the tree ;

Happy who can beneath its shadow rest !
—Ah ! might its blossom everlasting be !

LAUREL.

For my nosegay I cull of the poet's own tree,
This coveted spray on my head ne'er to be,
With your flowers to join, if I may :
Yet 'tis green on my dear shore in many a spot ;
Oh ! ye breezes of Leman, my fatherland's plot,
By your warmth make it fruitful, I pray !

Groves of Clarens, in memory graven so deep,
These branches of glory protect ye, and keep
From all blasts of the Boreal sky !
While at Chillon's foot throbbing the blue wavelets
play,
While a shelter seeks Montreux 'neath Jaman and
Naie,
Can the green-branching tree never die.

THORN AND BRIER.

Mè, poor thorn, doth Heav'n assign
Place the fairest flow'rs beside ;
See ! these stems round which I twine,
So hearts are by grief allied.

They that in dark bye-ways tread,
Feel me prick, and check, and cling ;
Once I crownèd Jesus' head :
I to pure brows glory bring.

COLCHICUM.

I am Autumn's flower so pale,
Horror of the grass yet green ;
Throes of heart and wonder fail,
See, here Winter's breath has been.

Here's my nosegay, 'tis one whereof you worthy are,
Yet take care of it, of my poor flowers take care !
They are gath'ring the vintage, they're reaping the field ;
Yes, and Time in our hearts soon his scythe comes to wield.
Did you know how some flowers already are dried,
That I sought in my bosom all closely to hide !
Yes, I know that no long years forgetfulness needs ;
That the heart rarely perfects designs into deeds ;
That no ear grows in fields of the fruitfullest soil,
If we keep not watch o'er it with diligent toil ;
That the feelings are fragile and frail we possess,
Like the flow'r of the meadows, nay last even less.

Guard my flow'rs, then, with sorrowful dew cover'd o'er.
Of the pearls of the morning I've lost all the store :
Oh ! ye tears of sweet Spring-tide, your cup broken lies,
But the storm and its showers still yield full supplies.
Yet in sympathies noble I faith have alway,
In those hopes which no wind bears so early away,

In the day that is coming to gild our thick sky,
In sweet tears wip'd away by the rays from on high !
Holy Love's flower lovely may shoot up awhile
Where the morning-star shines in a heart free from guile,
But a sprinkling of tears of the earth must combine,
Would we cause it to bloom 'neath a sunshine divine.

Baugy, 20th October, 1841.

XXX.

THE CHÂLETS OF LA VARE.

La Justice et la Grace ont chacune leurs heures ;
Dieu contre le pécheur n'est pas toujours tonnant,
La vengeance du ciel a des armes meilleures,
Car ses foudres souvent ne sont qu'intérieures,
Et le bras paternel punit en pardonnant.

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PRELUDE.

‘ Si vous tenez au romantisme, mettez-le tout dans la préface.”
Lettre.

WHEN on Æolian chords the night-airs blow,
Pure simple tones thence with no effort flow.
But poet, I, when press’d for a fresh song,
Seeking my star must scan the blue heav’ns long ;
I ask the sky, the night, th’ inspiring breeze—
Nor you, Academicians, less than these !
To what pitch must my lyre be strung, I say,
And in what soil be set my laurel spray ?
For now, oft on Parnassus veers the wind :
Each poet sings the way he is inclin’d ;
And in this concert strange, while none agree,
Senseless at least man’s profit threatens to be.

Shall my glad voice, with those in nature heard,
Carol at random, like a woodland bird ?
Or, from pure Taste, stern champion of her cause,
Shall I defend some vaunted system’s laws ?
Shall Aristotle teach — or who of all ?
Or shall I go, and ’neath some ruin’d wall

Strike my guitar to Arthur's great renown,
Fond of old times, disgusted with my own ?
Our modern Muse's retinue to swell,
Shall I from hoarse throat bellow forth as well,
Bottles strewn round, the tavern ditty rude,
Or love achievements of some coxcomb lewd ?
Shall our æsthetic lyres, with cant sublime,
Furnish me words unknown in Earth's low clime,
And 'mid these high retreats shall I succeed
Shelter to gain for songs that none will heed ?
Shall I, to cool my brow, 'neath shady grove,
With moonlit sighs or mornlit weepings rove,
And sow along the banks of famous streams
My exclamations and my famous dreams ?

Enough ! wilt lend to me that gallant boat,
With all her dreamy crew now wont to float ?
Then would I truly tell which azure wave
Of the moon's sheen the best reflection gave :
The number of the stars I'd then declare,
If myrtle, scent, or jasmin fill'd the air ;
Or how some veil'd and fair brow'd angel, say,
Had open'd in my heart a heav'nly way :
Enough ! the sweet lute of Romance wilt lend ?
Then should her name, her grace, my sighs ascend ;
And I'd recount how oft, with hopes renew'd,
My timid, longing heart she could delude.

—Ye Sacred Nine, why veil your faces o'er?
Why spurn the laurel that can bloom no more?
Such din, ye, Muses to Greek minstrels dear,
On your Parnassus were not wont to hear!
Your Helicon, with all its moist arcades,
Ah! vainly shields you: their soft serenades,
Their oaths effete, by lawless passion sworn,
Are heap'd on you by bards that now are born.
Muses! fear not that your unhoodwink'd son
To this foul herd will one more name join on!
Rather I fain would know in what deep grot,
Or of cool Tempe's vale in what lone spot,
What grove by breaths of Attica perfum'd,
What ruin'd shrine, where heroes are entomb'd,
Hid from our view that fair old lyre is laid,
Which Phœbus' self erst at the altar play'd?
Ah! might some tones, to which that lyre gave birth,
Reach in these twilight days the wond'ring earth,
Of those victorious strains, the prostrate crowd,
With voice and hands would wake applaudings loud!
For in our age 'tis not the heart we want,
Still breasts there are with echoing throbs that pant;
But her wild threshold has the Sphinx recrost,
For long the poet's secret has been lost.
Alas! on Troas' shores the sailor's eyes
Still see some waving hills forlornly rise;
But where on Leucas' rock the blue waves drift,
The eye in vain searches each yawning rift;

The sea which beats that crag with endless roar,
Has not yet cast the lyre divine ashore ;
'Twas Sappho bore it, where the waters spin,
When with her song of death she flung her in.
And drown'd therein, since then, full many lie,
Unable thence to draw the prize too high.
— Into this billowy world must I too spring,
And, luckless as them all, lie weltering ?
Of barren wishes must I thrid the maze ?
And court the bitter draught with no delays ?
For that ideal lyre must ever pine ?
And for the ocean-pearl my life resign ?—

But at the words his lyric fever went,
And the scar'd poet forward gazing leant ;
Waking, he saw his dream of old take flight,
Above the flood shone not the glitt'ring height.
The Grecian landscape vanish'd at a blow,
Th' Athenian sky mist-shrouded ceas'd to glow ;
The Priestess' lyre, the Muses, Helicon,
That famous world, all from his view was gone.

He sees, he sees within a well-known room,
Where a dull lamp can scarce dispel the gloom,
Some groups of friends. Their welcome knowing well,
He feels their social mirth his bosom swell ;

List—the sweet name of country greets his ear,
Simple the song, but loud, the rather dear :
Held out toward him many a dear hand see,
Methinks he whispers,—There's the world for thee !

Yes ! friends of infancy, your hearts I prize !
There I'll dread more nor rocks nor surging main ;
And from that narrow circle to the skies,
My hymns of hope shall yet some echoes gain !

Sparkled the night without serene and cold :
Over the lake star-rays, like shivers, flew :
And on its brink, the Alp-chain mist-enroll'd,
A cold and mighty rampart, hemm'd my view.

Said I, my brow turn'd to the Northern wind,
—Strength to our hearts this landscape stern shall lend !
The frame of earth God ne'er for flow'rs design'd ;
Praise we the work, yet not forget the end.

We, whom these mountains, dear rude peaks, enclose,
Will to the actual cling like rooted stone !
The breath of these lorn heights its fruit too knows,
But ripen'd for Eternity alone.

Dead trees were swaying in the freezing storm ;
But eastward as I turn'd my joyous eyes,
With throbs of sweetest hope my heart beat warm ;
Bethlehem's star was mounting in the skies.

CANTO I.

Streams of milk in abundance were yielded that day,
And the whole herd went joyful and lowing away,
And, saluting the night so transparent and clear,
Took the pathway once more to their pasturage dear.
But there's one of the herdsmen, his work at an end,
By the opposite road who prepares to descend.

In the land is the name of that shepherd not rare;
Known Cherix is, and lov'd by all mountain-folk there.
Now he hies to the valley, his green wealth to mow,
Taking leave of the herd after him wont to go.
While his wife, child on arm, walks a few steps beside,
To the rock, whence the down-winding path is descried.

All the week then alone needs must Isaline live,
And her cares to the chalet unceasingly give:
For a woman full hard is the labour, 'tis true,
Both to watch o'er the herd, and the milking to do;
Then the cheese must be slic'd too, and shap'd in the
mould;

—But she dreads not the work, for she is not yet old.

Thus each day with these folk and their cattle revolv'd;
For when spring's genial breath has the ice-field dissolv'd,

Is their winter-roof left and its shelter so drear,
And still higher and higher the lowings you hear,
As the heat near fresh "mazots"* above lets them roam,
To the chalet that's highest, for two months their home.

Often e'en in the valley not one will remain ;
But as soon as July's mellow fruits gild the plain,
At the harvest-time downward the mountaineers hie,
The rich grass of their meadows to mow and to dry.
For the winter is long in those latitudes rude ;
And the snow-buried kine need the hay for their food.

Thus the herdsmen of Vare all were mowing below,
On the women the charge of their kine forc'd to throw ;
And Cherix, last of all, was oblig'd to make haste,
Ere the season for hay should for ever be past.
Parting now from his wife, he leaves all to her care,
Well assur'd that his orders she'll mind to a hair.

—"Mowing over," he said, with a final embrace,
"At the latest on Sunday, my steps I'll retrace ;
Then shall *your* share of rest bring you ample amends ;
But the labour is urgent that summer-tide sends :
Ah ! my poor Isaline, heretofore in the glen,
When at home with your mother, you toil'd not so then !"

* Mazot, a name given, among the Vaudois Alps, to barns scattered about among the pastures, intermediate to the winter dwelling and the summer chalet.

—“Yes ! and then, too, the joy I possess, how remote !
Dear ! forbear thus the times of my girlhood to quote.
Ne’er of you or your infant too fond can I be :
Pleasure, pride, all, my family now is to me.
But of those left above, think at times, in yon plain,
And do all that you can soon to see them again !”—

They arrive at the rock where the path strikes away ;
Was the infant’s brow kiss’d, with its arms stretch’d to
 play,
And when Isaline’s hands had been clasped in his own,
He shot on with long strides down the pathway of stone.
But the mountaineer’s wife puts her child on the grass,
And beside him set, looks tow’rd the foot of the pass.

In the vallies Night’s shadows already are spread ;
But where Mûveran rears up its snow-cover’d head,
On the azure the roses of sunset are seen.
Yet the glorious tints there divert not her e’en,
As they down the ravine mark her dear husband’s track,
Who a parting Alp-cry, turning tow’rds her, sends back.

Youh-eh ! Blest who can lie down at peace then with
 all,
When the keen chills of Night upon Alpine heights fall !
Blest who dread in their cottage no treacherous foe,
And can think, “ Now for us pray’r is rising below ! ”
Youh-eh ! Sure is thy footing, O brave mountaineer !
Youh-eh ! God to thy helpmeet and child will be near !

As, afar off, she watch'd him now lost 'neath the pale
Of the pine-forests sombre 'twixt her and the vale;
On the mountains was dying the rich purple light;
And the "bise" of the glaciers, the cold breath of night,
O'er the châteaux was passing, where all seem'd asleep,
And then fears for her child through the mother's veins
creep.

In a moment she rises, her child on her arm,
And beneath the kind roof seeks the hearth scarcely warm;
Through her diligent haste, soon she closes the door;
Soon above the hot ashes the waving flames roar.
And within the sweet cradle her glad hands had spread,
Soon the infant reviv'd was reposing his head.

Sleeps the child: but the mother still stirr'd up the fire;
And, the pine-flame up-mounting with flickering spire,
She on tiptoe reach'd up to the beam for a book,
Very ancient, but dustless, there hid in a nook;
Near the hearth, as the holy page opes, she has bow'd,
And in tone grave and sweet, on her knees reads aloud.

This old book, the best treasure their poor hut can hold,
Is the gospel, their fathers erst studied of old;
And the Prayer-Hearer's name shines alike for our eyes
In the leaves of this book, and the page of the skies.
Than the simple folk dwelling in earth's mountain-land,
None can better these pages sublime understand.



Where with Nature they live all alone, He is there ;
With His greatness the Alps and the vallies are fair ;
And when Scripture is open'd, of yore as to-day,
Of a Father it tells them : His children are they.
Even thus, as the volume she closed, Isaline
Could survey her lone dwelling with look all serene.

Then she stoop'd and once more kiss'd the babe in his
cot,
Who in slumber a sigh or a sound utter'd not.
Where the window with double-flaps op'ning gave light,
Look'd she listening out and consider'd the night :
Ne'er was azure more beautiful ; ne'er had the sky
O'er the Alps a more glorious tent hung on high.

As from beacon-pile lit on Diableret's tow'rs,
On the vale, as she rose, fell the moon's beams in show'rs;
Off the tipp'd glaciers fresh came the wind with a moan ;
And the distant bell-music, low-tinkling, alone
Could the site of the late-watching cattle disclose.
All was calm in the sky ; — o'er earth brooded repose.

In the châteaux around her none watches, none stirs,
And the young wife her sleep now no longer defers ;
All ye faithful hearth-servants ! be ever awake !
That no noisy alarm come her slumbers to break !
Guardian sprites of the mountains ! protect well her bed,
On her threshold let no foot of violence tread !

When we sink to sleep praying, it seems all around,
As if nought but protection and love could be found ;
Those with heaven at peace no more enemies scare,
Not an avalanche frights, underfoot not a snare.
Should the wicked watch, he for himself lies in wait ;
God is watching besides ;— and God only is great !

Scarcely now had the morning her coming made known,
By a pale blush encircling the glacier's crown,
When, in slumber struck through by mysterious pang,
To her feet, though it early were, Isaline sprang,
While the eastern horizon light many-hued stains,
In the vale all around what a strange silence reigns !

Still the neighbours are peacefully sleeping, no doubt ;
But this morning why mute are the voices without ?
And the horn of the goatherd, why sounds it not too ?
Whereabouts stay the flocks ? And the cattle so true,
Round the chalet so ready to gather each day,
Why their milk now to bring do they longer delay ?

Why she heard them not, wonder fill'd Isaline's breast ;
Ne'er before of her heifers had she gone in quest.
'Tis in vain that some grey rocky shape her eye cheats,
'Tis in vain that the cliff some vague murmur repeats ;
She is running with loud cries her fellows to wake ;
—" Women ! see, what mishap comes our hills to o'ertake !

"Can it be that our herds all have vanish'd to-night ?
Run and look ! how the Vare pastures empty are quite."—
And forthwith are the women astir at the call,
And are sallying anxious. — But faster than all,
Isaline straight advances, and goes round the mere,
That in day's silver light now is glistening clear.

Now she walks, now she runs : and the bitter suspense,
As she stops to look round her, each moment augments.
Ah ! the love of the mountaineer's wife is the key
To her grief when no longer her herds she can see :
'Tis but just, as a part of the household, to love
The poor-kine that we feed, and our life too that prove.

Now arriv'd at the opposite side of the pond,
She is following a track through the pastures beyond ;
There are footsteps ; yet on — God ! of blood 'tis the
trace ! . . .

—And the form of an old man outstretch'd on his face ;
There's a dog she remembers that smells him and cries ; . . .
'Tis the old goatherd dying before her that lies.

When the soul on some near woe has fed to the fill,
And our spirit is struck with self-propheesied ill,
On a sudden, if some real evil befall,
The alarm of our bosoms tend thitherward all,
From that sad sight the soul a solution will draw,
Of the inward forebodings that fill'd her with awe.

O'er the form of the old man her own down she bends,
Touches him, rubs him warm, to his breathing attends ;
He reop'ning his eyes, with a glance of alarm,
Looks at her ; then, scarce raising his blood-cover'd arm,
On a sudden points out to the end of the glen ;
— “ There, the Valaisan,” saith he, “ the Valaisan men ! ”

'Tis sufficient for her ; that word only reveals
The whole thing, and her heart a cold shuddering feels.
For the morn, ever spreading more brilliant and fair,
Lets her own eyes distinguish, across the vale there,
In the distance some herds, dragg'd by yon brutal band
Tow'rd the hills of the Valais with vigorous hand.

At the instant the cottager women drew near :
— “ Hither,” cried she to them, “ all together run here,
Of our neighbours to witness the impudent train. . . .
And our kine past Mount Cheville that hurry amain !
Traitors ! well did they know that our men are away !
And our men, for whom then are they reaping the
hay ? ”

Shall the cries and the tears be rehears'd in my tale,
Of this group round the old wounded goatherd that wail ?
Isaline long'd to follow the booty anon,
Which through their lack of care with the robbers had gone.
But alas ! she her womanhood almost forgot,
When athwart her brave spirit another plan shot.

From what arm could she hope of deliverance see ?
Of what use could these women lamenting now be ?
To act bravely, with speed on your purpose to seize,
Are in these savage lands safety's sole guarantees.
Isaline then disdaining thus loudly to grieve,
Soon with long-measur'd strides of her sisters took leave.

First, the châlet to enter her eager foot prest,
Thence to bear forth her babe in the cradle at rest :
E'en amid her distress, ne'er was mother found yet,
Could her child, her sole jewel, one instant forget.
She awoke him not, him who could nothing forecast,
And the road of Les Plans soon was reach'd in her haste.

For her well-beloved burden she slack'd not her pace ;
But the very same pathway was bent to retrace
Which her husband, last ev'ning, with active foot trode ;
Not less nimble than he, or less sure of the road,
She the shortest cuts took, past the steps dash'd along,
Nor, with confidence bounding, her foot planted wrong.

How she ran 'neath the larches, 'twas famous to view,
Though the way steep and bristling with flint-pebbles grew ;
How she flew o'er the herbage with strawberries red :
And, though knee-deep the torrent was, travers'd its bed :
Then held on by the rocks, where the Avençon booms,
And the dark pine-wood enter'd 'neath cytissus' blooms.

At the glad hour, when heav'n was suffus'd with the sheen
Of the daybreak, and morning's first rays could be seen
Lighting up one by one all the summits around,
While the valley still lay with deep shadows embrown'd,
All the haymakers, rous'd by birds carolling sweet,
Had invaded the meadows still wet to the feet.

To their work on the hill-sides asunder they went,
And his morning salute from the distance each sent ;
In the soft grass the scythe grated everywhere ;
And the mower's steel rung as he fil'd it with care :
Then, the fresh-whetted blade when he wielded anew,
Fell the flow'rs of the meadow all dripping with dew.

Shone the sun : at the end of a field newly laid,
For a moment, Cherix, on his scythe leaning stay'd.
Of the neighbours a circle approach'd, with a smile
At the fine weather, chatting and standing the while,
On a sudden . . . whom sees he run o'er the bridge now,
Eye and cheek all on fire, wet in streams from her brow ?

'Tis his wife ! . . . with the infant ; and wherefore so
hot ?

With one movement to meet her they all loiter'd not ;
But the hedge made her stop her exhausted career ;
While—"Our cattle ! our cattle !" she gasp'd, drawing near ;
"To the false Valaisans they have fallen a prey,
Not a kid left behind ; their band drives them away."

Though no longer she spake, still to hear her they strain'd ;
And Cherix and his neighbours, wide-gaping, remain'd
Mute and thunderstruck all at the strange-mutter'd speech,
While a glance of suspicion each cast toward each :
At the thought of believing these tidings they flout,
And if Isaline spake with sound mind seems a doubt.

Then the mountaineer-woman her breath freely draws,
And her voice breaks them off from this ruinous pause :
—“ What ? so hard then it is to interpret my words ?
Yes ! beyond the heights there they are dragging your herds,
From the châteaux the while all the men were afar,
What could we do against them, weak arms that we are ?

“ Came they stealthy like wolves, with the night for their
shield ;

Not a sound throughout Vare the base traitors reveal'd ;
The old goatherd alone was struck down by their blows ;
Of the beasts they were masters ere daylight arose.
But will you, whose sole goods these marauders have ta'en,
Will you do nought to rescue these cattle again ? ”

At these words you might think that the trembling vale o'er
Twenty furious bulls were conspiring to roar,
For Cherix and his friends altogether up-sprang,
Scythes were brandish'd in air ; and these quiet spots rang
With their outcries of menace and death, onward roll'd
From each echoing rock, to the ice-peaks so cold.

—“ For our herds and their blood ! Run, my good neighbours, arm !

Onward there ! ” cried the herdsman his comrades to warm ;

“ Run to arms ! be the cry, let the roads echo it !

Both our kine and your own we will never permit

Round Mount Cheville to pass ; or if need be, will go

On the search to their homes in the vallies below.”—

Thrill’d with fear at these voices resounding with wrath,

In Les Plans was no mower that left not his swath ;

But for answer all round o’er the green mountain-flanks,

Came they near Isaline in their close-serried ranks.

—“ Go ! ” the mountaineer’s wife cried out briskly again ;

“ Run, let no business here for a moment detain !

“ Even now have the traitors long time been kept back

By the obstinate beasts and the difficult track ;

Only by Solalex up the well-known paths climb,

And no doubt on Anzeindaz you’ll be in good time.

The scar’d Valaisan band will take flight at the view,

And their spoil without fail will relinquish to you.”—

—“ Yes, and there, Isaline, shall the reckoning be !

Woman ! wouldest thou suffer these wretches to flee ?

What ! the old goatherd’s death would o’erwhelm us with
shame.

Ah ! the news let us act on wherewith here you came !

Up the valley, friends ! mount we the Avençon’s bed !

And with blood, ere the nightfall, its stream shall be red ! ”—

—“Crime for crime, no ! His children alone God will speed !
Fool ! why cam'st thou among us for carnage to plead ?
Have no thought, friends, except to recover your own,
Let me not curse the day when this news I made known !
Would to God that our herds might be sav'd from their hand,
But forbid it that blood e'er should redden our land !”—

When man's anger has once been aroused at your beck,
'Tis in vain, 'tis too late then his spirit to check !
In Les Plans, of the mowers none linger'd behind ;
All to execute justice were hotly inclin'd :
Aye, a justice of blood ! for such fault, an excess,
And the work it accomplishes, vengeance, no less.

From the Avençon's banks to each dense forest-lair
Ring the outcries of sudden alarm ev'rywhere ;
And the vale of Les Plans, for tranquillity born,
With the tokens of hatred on all sides is torn.
Even so, in these sweet haunts of quiet and bliss,
When the tempest is crashing, twice fearful it is.

CANTO II.

—Through Les Plans' vale, with alder and cytissus gay,
When the Avençon's torrent glides calmer away
Ere it open a course tow'rd the Rhone, other hills
Furnish many a tribute of foam-crested rills ;

And among them two streams, each from separate dell,
Blend with it their own waters its volume to swell.

Comes the first, o'er the rock-walls of Mûverand's side,
Through the narrow ravine by which Isaline hied ;
From La Vare to the vale 'tis the way that you keep,
While the other flows down beyond Argentine's steep ;
For the Anzeindaz pastures their freshness may trace
To full many a spring at Diableret's base.

Where the chamois when thirsty oft visits the brink,
Come the herds in the fair summer-season to drink ;
Like a dark-frowning portal, the mountains hard by
To their Valaisan neighbours below bound the eye.
It is there that the crafty and envious rout
Has the difficult road of La Vare followed out.

And the men of Les Plans at the very same spot
Will await it returning, with vengefulness hot ;
There the hand will accomplish their bloodthirsty scheme ;
But as yet at this hour is deep silence supreme,
Such as hovers o'er Alpland each bright day at morn ;
Up the blue sky as yet not a cloudlet is borne.

Now, however, the mowers, on vengeance intent,
Up the gorge of the torrent with eagerness went.
Cherix, leading, outstrips them and hurries them on ;
No delay is allow'd ; at full speed they are gone,
And, all strange as they are to such sudden alarms,
Time to spare is not theirs : more than one has no arms.

Save a carbine, and knife such as hunters employ,
Which a neighbouring cottage to some gives with joy,
Scythes alone had the most for their murderous plan ;
Preparation seems lost time to every man.
Little reck's it themselves with their arms to provide ;
Let them meet with the cowards : they wish nought beside.

Is the ill-defined pathway no obstacle made.
A dark wood intercepts it ; they plunge through its shade :
From his hiding the wood-cutter starts up, to know
Whither stealthily thus they and rapidly go :
Just a word, as they pass, is sufficient response,
And their band the stout wood-cutter follows at once.

Soon to view Solalex's amphitheatre tow'rs ;
'Neath their feet pastures spread rich with herbage and
 flow'rs ;
And the mighty Diablerets, glacier-crown'd,
In a single proud story shoot up from the ground.
But this pass, with its manifold turns, let them gain,
Over whose splinter'd boulders they clamber with pain,

And the troop will have master'd those high mountain-
 stairs !
But, exhausted already, what efforts are theirs
Up the desolate gorge of the torrent to wend,
And the toilsome defile to its summit ascend !
By their sweat on the rocks you might find out their track,
But his courage not one feels an instant to slack.

Glad of heart when they all are to rally again,
—"Halt," Cherix gives the word, "for an instant, my men,
At the foot of this rock, in a lurking-place lie;
I myself will approach unattended and spy!"—
Full of hope, then, and careful his steps to efface,
Goes he on, and surveys to a distance the place.

For a long time the Valaisan freebooters strove
To conduct by the steep rugged pathway their drove.
Seems as if, dreading all their allurements, the kine
To recover their own pale of meadow-grass pine.
And the while at each instant fresh hindrances rise,
The unloitering sun climbs the unclouded skies.

Now the "Col" of Paneyrosse they come to at last;
And La Vare fades from view, when the hill-crest is pass'd.
Happy are they to mark, as they traverse this land,
How between them and vengeance the mountain-walls
stand;
And the lingering beasts, they were urging a-head,
O'er the flanks of Anzeindaz now readily tread.

Precious herd! it has cost them much cunning and strength,
Many efforts and arts! . . . but they have it at length!
To their own cots once more they are taking the way,
There to-night they'll secure in concealment their prey;
If the self-same attempt twenty times you repeat,
With success in the issue you cannot but meet!

On these wilds to be anxious what need is there now ?
Some inhale, as they stroll, their own air from below ;
Down the wavy slopes others right fearlessly press,
And the worth of their prize while beforehand they guess,
Through a valley hemm'd in upon all sides, advance,
Where the herds, as they graze, lead them many a
dance.

After crime unalarm'd and securely to live,
Is to dream that the judgments of God can deceive !—
On a sudden there echo the clash and the shout :
All the outcries of hell in full chorus burst out ;
And with merciless wrath, rushing out from its lair,
The avenging band crushes them everywhere.

By the mountain recesses, all eager and dumb,
Slow and sure to the summit our herdsmen were come ;
Through a vale less profound, at the very same time,
Pass the foe, driving forward the proofs of their crime,
And remember not who were the owners yestreen.—
'Tis impossible now to forget it, I ween.

On the mountain arises a din fraught with fear ;
And the cries of assailants on all sides they hear :
—“ Death to traitors !—Papistical fiends to the grave !—
We have found you, ye wretches, at pillage so brave !”—
And the beasts, in that riotous scene taking flight,
Run about through the mêlée and bellow with fright.

* * * * *

Of these terrors, ye, witnesses silent and lorn,
Giant heights of Diablerets ! how must ye scorn
Rage in efforts and outcries so dwarfish express'd !
By your grandeur how deem them a folly, a jest !
Yet these pitiful atoms ye wink at, the while
Your dominions with bloodshed they come and defile.

Ah ! but once when your anger goes forth in its pride,
Be it only to roar, shake the Alps far and wide
On their tottering base at each terrible tone ;
And the valley with ruins enormous is strown.
Men, however, who know of such danger, 'neath you
Can their hands in the blood of their fellows imbrue.—

Now, assur'd of their prey, raining blows like the hail,
On the edge of the gorge, the Les Plans' men assail ;
Starts the troop from its hiding, their enemies yield,
Not more quickly this morn bow'd the grass of the
field ;

And as each does his best in the murderous task,
Fall the victims or ever for grace they can ask !

No escape can be made from their bloodthirsty heat ;
And the business of vengeance ere long is complete :
Faint already, their arms cannot strike any more,
And their wrath is extinguish'd in torrents of gore.
Then it is, 'mid the tumult now going to die,
All at once there resounds a long piteous cry.

At the sound, so distinct that they all can discern,
To the top of the mountain once more they return ;
And behold, Isaline there is running, dismay'd,
If the ills she has caus'd may perchance be delay'd ;
From afar off, she tosses aloft both her hands,
Then at sight of this massacre, shuddering, stands :

She is silent a long while ; at length, drawing nigh,
—“ O ye merciless cut-throats ! what work ! ” is her cry ;
“ Is there water can cleanse you from blood so profuse ?
Of their theft it was I who first brought you the news ;
Would to God that we rather had herdless remain'd,
Than as now, with so fearful a crime to be stain'd ! ”—

Straight of motion and utterance all are depriv'd
Out of rightful respect ; had it sooner arriv'd !
At their violent deeds when her protest is hurl'd,
Might she almost seem sent from a heavenly world.
The arena of cruelty now she surveys,
And the earth round yields nothing but death to her
gaze.

When the wicked conspire, failure stands in the way ;
Of the thirty, who travers'd the hills yesterday,
One remains : but a blow is Cherix bent to deal ;
When the cry of his wife makes him lower his steel,
Ready, grasping the throat of that last Valais pad,
To the blood of his fellows his life-blood to add.

Forthwith Isaline, trembling, the action foresees,
And the arm of her husband runs quickly to seize ;
—“ Dost thou think, then, a single survivor too much ?
Ah ! permit but this one to escape from our clutch :
Let him go, and at least tell the wives of their end,
That these spirits they may to God’s mercy commend ! ”—

—“ True, a bearer is needful the tidings to take,
Yes, begone, villain ! ” then does Cherix answer make,
“ How we know to take vengeance, ’tis yours to apprise,
How our neighbours’ detestable fraud to chastise,
Say, how prompt are our acts ! bid them henceforth
beware !

We shall be more on guard than we yesterday were.”—

A mule straying at will o’er the mountains is caught,
’Twas the only one they of the Valais had brought.
The sad messenger straightway they mount upon it,
And with bitterness urge him these purlieus to quit.
First, however, comes Isaline, weeping amain,
And the wretched man stays, with her hand on the rein :

—“ Hence away, lonely wayfarer, go and report
That deceitful is ever such violent sport,
That the plot of the robber his shroud oft has been,
And avengers themselves deem their vengeance too keen.
Above all, tell the wives how, because of their woe,
You beheld tears of genuine sorrow outflow ! ”—

Nimble bounding, the beast with his rider goes thence,
And our shepherds long track them with gazings intense.
All the mountains with newborn tranquillity shine ;
Peace resumes her dominion ; and joyous the kine,
Shaping over Anzeindaz' fine greensward their course,
Graze with relish, not knowing or fear or remorse.

Cans't thou read me, when all is so placid around,
What is whisper'd within by this silence profound,
This repose of the dead, this bright passionless hour ?
To forget it, too late, if they had but the pow'r,
Then these men would not, doubtful how next to proceed,
Have remain'd so long mute in the face of their deed.

Slowly, sadly, at length they leave off to reflect :
On the brow of the mountain a trench they select ;
'Twas the bed of a torrent, whose tide long had ceas'd,
And with no little labour its depth they increas'd.
For a sepulchre needs must be chosen hard by,
For the bones of such numbers, all lifeless that lie.

By the herdsmen these corpses, all stiffen'd and cold,
Are collected and laid side by side in the mould ;
On the hill-top they gather the flints that abound,
And of these on the spot raise a funeral-mound ;
Isaline then, to witness how she also shares
In these sad scenes, contributes her pebble to theirs.

From her face, on which infinite sorrow is drawn,
Mortal awe to the hearts of the shepherds is borne ;
With authority fraught, like a prophetess' speech,
Sent of God to the altar, His people to teach,
Is the tone of her stern voice, as pausing the while,
She harangues them, her hand on the burial-pile :

— “ See, of vengeance this monument preaches a tale !
At the sight of it here well might treachery quail,
And beyond it not go. But for us, let us dread,
Lest the red dew, just now in this neighbourhood shed,
Rise anew, and a dark whirlwind helping to form,
On our vale burst hereafter with deafening storm ! ” —

While their eyes are fixed earthward, their visages droop,
With emotion to listen there stands all the group ;
Even now the presentiment rises, that they
Evermore shall be dogg'd by the ghosts of to-day ;
For their bosoms, ill-trained for such barbarous sin,
Feel already remorse a-preparing within.

Tow'rd the hills of their home then their faces they set,
Slowly urging their herds, on the mountain-top met ;
Though the sum of their wishes this seems to complete,
Ever deep is the silence as back they retreat ;
And the hazardous pathway, before them that winds
Down the defile, recalls not their wandering minds.

For the sky, whereon morn pour'd so brilliant a light,
By an ill-omen'd curtain is now hid from sight ;
O'er the valley the murmuring thunder-clouds jar,
Grows the gathering tempest to Westward afar,
And the mist crowds on Mûveran, layer after layer,
Like a dark castle lording the ambient air.

Wider now is the track which the herdsmen pursue ;
And La Vare, with its greensward, spreads out to their view ;
Since the morning's disaster, e'en now all is chang'd.
In their valley, beholding these cottages rang'd,
Like the eagle's eggs sunk in their rock-cradled nest,
One might say, " Here dost thou, Peace Celestial, rest ! "

But the while that the cattle their lowings renew'd,
From delight to revisit their pastures so good,
In the hearts of the men more intense is the haze,
As the storm wears each moment a murkier phase.
Though approaching the homes where they peacefully
dwelt,
By their souls is the joy of returning unfelt.

Yet 'twas here that in peace, ev'ry summer the same,
On a cheese-making errand their forefathers came ;
On those slopes, too, it once seemed so happy a time
When they tended their herds, in their own youthful prime :
Thither, too, was the gath'ring that festival-tide,
To their midsummer dance when the valley-folk hied.

From yon roof-trees so lowly, in many a spire
Rose the smoke, as they stirr'd the *seré** on the fire !
With their neighbours at night-fall, close barring the door,
Round those hearths to converse was delightful of yore.
— Scene of innocent happiness, peace, and employ !
To revisit you, brings it no pleasure, no joy ?

Yes, what blows at such moments, sure-planted and deep,
On the heart of the guilty Remorse loves to heap !
'Tis a marvel those places unalter'd to find,
Which they quitted, alike pure in hand and in mind !
Not adapted to them, and as strangers they feel ;
Like themselves, needs must all in uncertainty reel !

More than all runs the thought in the breast of Cherix :
What can mean all this blood, peaceful shepherd, on thee ?
But the while awe and anguish his inmost soul wring,
In his hearing hard by runs a sweet Alpine spring ;
And towards its light murmur his footsteps are led,
Even thrust by a longing commingled with dread.

Bending downward, he dips there his arms with a splash,
And his flesh creeps the fatal pollution to wash ;

* After the cheese has been extracted from the milk, what is left is prepared again after a certain manner, and the result is a white substance resembling curds, which they call "*seré*," and which the peasants of the Swiss mountains live upon to a large extent.

Next the shepherds ; ah ! how with the blood that they spilt,
They would wish that pure water could cleanse, too, from
guilt !

Then their chief, all in tears, in the midst trembling stands,
Lowly bent is his brow, skyward pointed his hands :

— “ Not in Thy sight, O Lord, is our hand free from stain !
But, Almighty and Just One, Thine anger restrain !
At Thy pureness all-perfect our arms we have rear'd,
'Twas no bloodthirsty God that our fathers rever'd ;
Age to age speaks Thy mercies around us up-pil'd,
And our heritage we now with blood have defil'd !

“ May the wretches whom we have consign'd to their doom,
Our repentance behold from the depth of their tomb !
Sure some demon, O God, must have blinded our eye !
At our doors can the guilt of this vengeful work lie ?
Set a watch on our hearts ! and our hands, also, Lord !
One brief hour has transform'd us to monsters abhorrd !”

With a hearty “ Amen,” too, the band, each in turn,
Heaven's mercy and peace by entreaty would earn.
From on high grace can drop into penitent hearts.
Through the sun's veil so dense-wove a single ray darts ;
And the while on the champaign the deluge comes down,
Pardon's bow on the hills shines, a luminous crown.

Scarce their “ Amen ” is utter'd, and Hope anew peers
With its radiant light through their sanctified tears,

When a fresh troop arrives, and the eye soon has found
The glad goatherd whose wounds had been carefully bound;
All the women attend him, and welcome the kine,
After which they thought hopelessly henceforth to pine.

Isaline reads the omen writ up on the skies,
And his child to Cherix shows with cheerfuller eyes.
He his visage averts, in unfeignèd distress,
From the brow which his lips used so often to press;
And at length when his wife to his arm has transferr'd
The poor wondering infant, his sobbings are heard:

—"Art thou still my own child, tender innocent, say?
I . . . thy father . . . scarce venture to bless thee to-day!
God forbid that man's blood thy hands ever should spill!
Anger working within God assist thee to kill!"—
Then in haste to their homes our folk noiselessly wend,
For the night on these hills was about to descend.

Of the triumphs of princes, say, whence came the thought,
As before me these shepherds their châteaux resought?
When a hero with bloodshed makes provinces mourn,
He is crown'd, and in pomp to his palace is borne;
In their madness the people a trophy prepare,
Joy extinguishes all, not a murmur is there.

But the march of these shepherds, how different far!
Though the stern Alpine portals to them open are,

Not a cry from afar awakes echoings loud.
Of their courage heroic let others be proud ;
They, in secret, their glorious exploit lament,
And to view their sav'd cattle are scarcely content.

Of the children of Glory let other men chant !
Be the shepherds my theme ! yes, I love to descant
How they won, and their victory curs'd in a breath,
And detested the day ever onward till death.
Crops of glory terrestrial worthless I rate,
Which are sown by fond pride, and are water'd by hate.

By a herdsman, who offer'd his cot as my screen,
Was this sorrowful story once told me at e'en ;
I have noticed the mountaineer shunning to go
With his mule past the spot that reminded of woe ;
— And those penitent tears angels faithfully guard,
Till the great day shall dawn of Almighty award.

XXXI.

TO MY FRIEND S * * *

THE POET.

HENCE away, ye paltry blessings! bliss that dwells on
earthly ground!

Where apace flies happiness, and Hope is far beyond our
call:

'Tis not in the lowly haven, but upon the sea profound,
That my sail has gain'd the ocean, plain of water without
bound;

And when I have nothing more, then 'tis in hoping I
have all!

MAN.

Hence away, vain bliss, that ever lures our hope with fresh
recoil!

That which morning offers, often missing is in ev'ning cool:
On the land my sire bequeath'd me, let me live apart from
broil,

There the rip'ning fruit to gather, without harassing the
soil,

Present good t' enjoy suffices— Hope abandon to the fool!

GOD.

Woe betide your foolish wishes, fires that but a day appear!
Cheating good, that in a moment must below the earth be
gone!

For My love, and that alone, the riddle of your souls can
clear ;

Have ye *faith*, for to believe is all to have and hope, in one!

1836.

XXXII.

FINIS.

(SOME VERSES WHICH TERMINATE A COLLECTION.)

Soon, like these pages, will the whole scene end ;
Just as my songs have fill'd them line by line,
I shall have finish'd soon each day of mine,
And tow'rd the coming world my glad way wend,
Full of those days that all return decline.
Now since the Muse in future meets my eyne
All round me, to the hope my soul I lend,
That, in death's hour, renew'd life Heav'n will send,
The while, with Hope and Love, my eyes upturning shine !

XXXIII.

HOPE.

For me, pure drops of gladness glitter still
In human bliss, that we disdain at will ;
Some shreds of Innocence still meet our view,
Pleasures without regret, and lasting too ;
Hopes more than one from out my future shine.

One, above all, delights this heart of mine :
'Tis love marital, 'tis that here below
In household ties some bliss and joy we know.
Oh! it is sweet to have one's own fireside,
There, with our dear ones, peaceful to abide !
'Tis sweet at eve, in the old hall, to see
A fair-hair'd infant smiling on our knee ;
Light o'er its head each hand to pass along,
And lull asleep with well-remember'd song !
What matter, then, the seasons out of doors,
If nights are bitter, or the tempest roars !
Behold ! the hearth before us, flame bestrown ;
In vain with dismal voice the windblasts moan :

See, by my side, the angel of my vows,
Soul of my soul, my heart's elected spouse,
She bends towards me, on my shoulder rests !
As on some stem a flower's slender crests
Seek shelter in the garden's close retreats,
Rend'ring thereto a thousand heav'nly sweets.
Oh ! flower of my love, life's crowning sum,
With what embalming perfumes see her come !
Why should heav'n's denizens my envy move ?
Has earth no angel, too, to give me love ?
Will not a voice with my complaints unite,
My sighs of love, my transports of delight ?
If suffer still I must,—my troubles dry,
Quench'd in one tear-drop from her pitying eye.

Happy he for whom two souls united are so,
Whether living or dying, for bliss and for woe !
For his joys with his hopes twofold multiplied are ;
And halv'd is each grief wherein she has a share !

Can so matchless a happiness come unto me ?
That sister I wait for one day shall I see ?
Shall a bliss so o'erpow'ring my lot ever bless ?
And so thrilling a love shall I live to possess ?

Let us hope ! let us hope ! how the words comfort give !
Let us hope ! for Hope never was made to deceive.
And if Happiness be not a meaningless sound,
Sure it cannot for ever evasive be found !

Let us hope ! let us hope ! 'tis the key-note of life !
'Tis the word wherewith Grief and Affection are rife !
'Tis the word that all Poesy utters, all Song,
But the which we'll no more have to utter ere long !

1836.

XXXIV.

THE STAR.

To slumber now day's weary toils invite,
And the breeze freshens with the shades of night ;
Sadly I gain my lodging, lonesome spot :
Alas ! the livelong day I've seen *thee* not !
I scan the nightly sky, perchance to see
That star arise which tells my destiny ;
Thy window-panes a sudden light reveal,
I cry, Behold my star ! and nearer steal.

Still her lamp burns : but wherefore is she watching yet ?
On what cares or reflections so late is she set ?
Maybe, gives she the reins to her true-beating heart ;
In her musings by night, maybe, I have a part !

No doubt she is pensive, her head she inclines,
There's a smile on her lip, on her eyes a tear shines ;
Or tow'rd heav'n as she gazes, her soul lingers there :
And her pious brow bending, she kneeleth for pray'r.

.

May the pray'r of her innocence, dewy and bright,
Rise to God like a perfume that's sweet in His sight !
And of Hope or Affection should any sigh now
Mingle also, vouchsafe, Lord, to favour her vow !

But lo ! the lamp has suddenly gone out,
And Night her-veil of darkness spreads about ;
Fair starry rays in at our windows peer,
That in this sombre sky are mirror'd clear.
Oh, it is ours ! that star with silver sheen,
Over thy slumb'ring eyes it loves to lean !
Star of my love ! can there in heaven ride
Another one so pure and bright beside ?
Soon shall we come together by its blaze,
Through paths of blessing led and flow'ry ways ?
Soon shall its beams of light, that tremble down,
Fling on our meeting brows a glory-crown ?
Behold our star, its language comprehend,
It speaks to thee, my fair and tender friend !
Learn, then, this omen in the sky to trace,
Of Faith and Hope, of Life and Happiness.
If souls, indeed, some chain in secret draws,
If Sympathy maintains for us her laws ;
Sacred exponents if of Love there be,
And he with hearts commune ineffably,
No doubt, this moment my desiring breast
Has to thine own concordant speech address !
No doubt thy love, thy heart's mysterious fire,
Hear felt my own some comfort now inspire.

But already 'tis late, and all earthly eyes close ;
There's a dream on its way now to charm thy repose ;
'Tis of slumber the hour, when thy pray'rs ended are ;
See and greet yet again at thy windows the star.

And then sleep, sleep in peace, for it watches on high ;
To guard us, by God it was plac'd in the sky,
To play through the night on thy slumbering brow,
And our way in this dark world to both of us show.

1836.

XXXV.

MEMORY AND HOPE.

WITH the rapid flight of Time,
Even now the circling year
Strikes anon its closing chime !
Soon her new-born sister's here !
Gone the Past and Infancy ;
See in front the Future ope ;
On one side lies Memory,
And upon the other Hope.

Days of evil, happy days,
Those that come and those that go,
In succession pass always,
Hand in hand enlinkèd so :
And the moments, as they flee,
Vainly held by mortal rope,
Leave us yester Memory,
For to-morrow give us Hope.

Bliss seems rather to retire,
As its colours shine more bright ;
In the fruitless search we tire,
For away it wings its flight ;
Rush to seize it presently,
From your grasp it hastes t' elope,
Now it is but Memory,
Or, perchance, a distant Hope.

Phantoms of fair days that rise,
Boyhood's rapturous desires,
Earliest Affection's sighs,
Pleasant dreams that Love inspires ;
Youth allied to Purity,
Though hot with the world to cope
Ah ! this is but Memory,
Ye exist no more in Hope.

But bright dreams that spread abroad,
Glory have we, ties of heart,
Household comfort, and tow'rd God
We have Mary's better part :
For His boons our pray'rs shall be,
March we on, nor faintly grope ;
If we have fair Memory,
Fairer far beyond is Hope !

December 31st, 1836.

XXXVI.

TO M. SAINTE-BEUVE.

COUPLETS SUNG IN A SERENADE GIVEN BY THE STUDENTS.

I, the plain's heat sought to lose
On a mountain-top serene,
When a pilgrim of the Muse
Passing in the vale was seen.
To mine ears, from off the land,
Came his name we love so true,
And I cried from that high stand :
" Mount ! our rocks are all for you !

In our shelter he was sought,
'Mid a joyous shepherd-knot ;
But some blast with contest fraught
Then uptore him from this spot.
Yet our shores he cares for best,
And among us comes anew ;
Vainly mists the Alps invest,
Come ! our heaven is for you !

Come, and be to us rehears'd
All the hermit's pious heat,
And his faith, of myst'ries first,
Binding him to Jesu's feet ! *
Say, too, how from poet fell,
As he knelt, the tearful dew,
And of holy love the spell
Speak ! our hearts are all for you !

Rest on in these still retreats,
Shelter'd by high hills above !
Dwell there not some secret sweets
Near the lake we dearly love ?—
Yes ! full many a bird has found
Sweet rest on the banks we view ;
Havens safe from storm abound,
Here abide ! 'tis all for you ! ”

November 7th, 1837.

* M. Sainte-Beuve was about to give at the Academy a course of lectures on Port-Royal.

XXXVII.

ANSWER OF M. SAINTE-BEUVE

TO THE FOREGOING COUPLETS, AND TO THE STUDENTS OF THE
VAUDOIS SECTION OF THE SOCIETY OF ZOFINGEN.

To your verses and songs, friends, or e'er I replied,
I would fain, all sedate and my prose laid aside,
 Heed the swallows, at least, as they sing ;
I would fain—but behold, here's a song from my breast,
That your song unexpected itself has express'd,
 And to you speeds on venturous wing.

From a faith at all seasons my numbers out-flow,
Whether smiles on your glittering summits the snow
 With a freshness oft newly-bestow'd ;
Or each beautiful sunset, renewing its freaks,
Visits all the white flock of up-rear'd snowy peaks,
 Sowing roses and stars on its road.

E'en on days that are darkest, when all is so blear,
When the lake, the black skies, and blue mountains appear
 Triple-rank'd in a close-serried row,

From the threshold of heaven some swift flashes dart,
And some hours, too, of brightness there are for the heart
That accords with this frame-work of woe.

All that here the eye ranging to seize on can pant,
Where each chaste dream is mirror'd, is bounded each want,
Altar high for the calm spirit's vows ;
And below, too, so mild for diseas'd ones, Montreux,
And sweet Clarens' nest there, to its name ever true,
Where e'en Winter soft breezes allows ;

Yes, these spots all . . . I know them, I love, too, the whole ;
And their echo so pious yet rings in my soul,
Cheer'd of late by your voices lov'd well,
By that vigour which Heaven and fatherland lent !
For of two lands the worship ye keep ever blent,
Children ye both of Davel and Tell.

Keep it alway, your unions from injury screen,
Fix the eye on that point where alone we can lean,
If we would not that all go to wreck.
For our fatherland here, would it lengthen its days,
Into *that* must strike root, and its head upward *raise*,
Which we reach at the sepulchre's beck.

Sons of heart pure and strong, all your holy ties keep,
Of the past rife with young vows that worship so deep,
And that mastering love of your lake,

And that love of the Alps, which your sure foot bears high
With the lightness of Spring, amid cloud and blue sky,
Whence your songs of Earth's beauty awake.

And should one of you, poet whose hope compass'd all,
Bold, with eyes like the lightning, not dreaming a fall,
Drop, alas! in the soundless abyss,
Keep a shrine, in your heart, for the minstrel that's gone,
Which more sure than another, once trusted, of stone,
Aye is mindful and aye will increase.

For those voices so noble, that bide with you still,
By their songs wont your heart with emotion to fill,
Have a love firm and free from disgrace.
Be ye faithful all piety's germs to mature,
And for them keep a memory, aye to endure,
Who but sit here and vanish apace.

December 1837.

XXXVIII.

WHAT LACKS WITHIN THIS HEART OF MINE ?

DID ever mountain, lake, and sky,
Bright in such sweet accord appear ?
Did Night, from plains that scented lie,
Send up to us such perfumes e'er ?
See, shrubs with rosy blossoms full !
See, stars, the types of candour, shine !
What lacks where all is beautiful ?
What lacks within this heart of mine ?

Already crowds the terrace throng,
There are vain beauties in a swarm !
The youth behind them press along,
Pure pleasures spread thro' ev'ning calm.
Go, go and 'neath her vail so dank,
Where Bliss resides you may divine ;
All joyous are—but where's a blank ? . . .
What lacks within this heart of mine ?

Now through the foliage peers the moon ;
 Wakes up the band, all vocal made ;
 Its sounds, with Nature's self in tune,
 So strong, so sweet, the voices aid.
 I love thee, Music infinite !
 Our souls with Earth and Heav'n combine !
 But what note lacks thy concord quite ? . . .
 What lacks within this heart of mine ?

Lausanne, 1838.

XXXIX.

THE POET'S TEARS.

FRAGMENT.

* * * * *

DEAR, too, are the burning expressions that dart
From a bosom that heaves with tempestuous grief ;
Dear to me is the concord divine, when the heart
Wrung with anguish, in weeping alone finds relief.

The times of the poet of yore are gone by,
By his magical utt'rance when Nature was bound ;
Or of Heav'n and its deities, interpreter high,
He expounded their laws to the people around ;

When that fair sky of Greece, with its sun's festal blaze,
Saw him sing of the conqu'ror in combat and game,
While his breast swell'd with triumph, his brow wore the
bays,
And thousands, admiring, re-echoed his name !

The times are gone by, when, with riveted ear,
Upon chanthers of glory and love princes hung;
Or on cheeks of proud ladies there glisten'd a tear,
As the pale youthful troubadour plaintively sung!

The bright times when Echo gave back, on the shore,
The Warrior's high deeds, his last glorious stage;
When the sea and the tempest were silent before
The lays of the Northern Bard hoary with age!

* * * * *

March 1837.

XL.

DIRGE FOR THE YEAR 1841.*

FRAGMENT.

FRIENDS, the gods bid adieu to our pitiful shore,
Her girdle in ocean flings Venus away ;
Of Cythera she leads up the dances no more,
In our air Love and Beauty are gone to decay.

'Neath the green laurel-shade of their grottoes profound,
Long the choir of Helicon slumbering lies ;
And her fair tresses bathing, that sweep to the ground,
No longer Diana awaits the sunrise.

Ah ! these gods, for whose worship men builded the fane,
All these gods that are faded, is none left to mourn ?
Is there none round their coffin to chant a sad strain,
Among us prosy mortals, so sadly forlorn ?

* Only the beginning and end of this piece are here given : the part omitted had so confined an application to the Society of Zofingen as to be uninteresting to the general public.

Janus, too, to regret now will no one be bold,
 The old door-keeper once of New-years that are past,
 Who, with keys in his hand, turn'd his visage twofold,
 On the coming year this one, and that on the last ?

* * * * *

Ah ! friends of my youth, on the tide though we view
 Our bark drifting onward, we sing on always ;
 To our desolate earth, see, the gods bid adieu,
 And fled beyond hope are the beautiful days.

Yes, the gods bid adieu in these times, above all,
 Each bosom perceives it, all lone like the tomb :
 With the past year, of how much we've witness'd the fall
 In that gulph ever open, and yet there is room !

But now, when to roses frost fatally clings,
 When the year goes to sleep in its mourning array,
 When so many sweet hopes, and so many fair things,
 In its coffin all gloomy are swallow'd for aye,

Christmas, Christmas His star has beheld in the night !
 The idols depart, but to us God is giv'n !
 When the shadows of Death veil the earth from our sight,
 May we follow the newly-born Star into heav'n !

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